

THE **GAME BOY ADVANCE** MAGAZINE

ADVANCE

100% INDEPENDENT

ISSUE 01 ★ £3.50

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65

GBA games
reviewed
& rated!

▶ ALL 40 TRACKS MAPPED!

**MARIO KART
SUPER CIRCUIT**

Killer 24-page player's
guide - WIN EVERY TIME!

Why you **MUST** play
Wario's fantastic GBA debut!

WARIO LAND 4

▶ ACCESSORIES SUPERTEST

COOL KIT

We test the best
and bin the rest!

BRAND-SPANKING
NEW!

BUNG IT
IN YER BAG!

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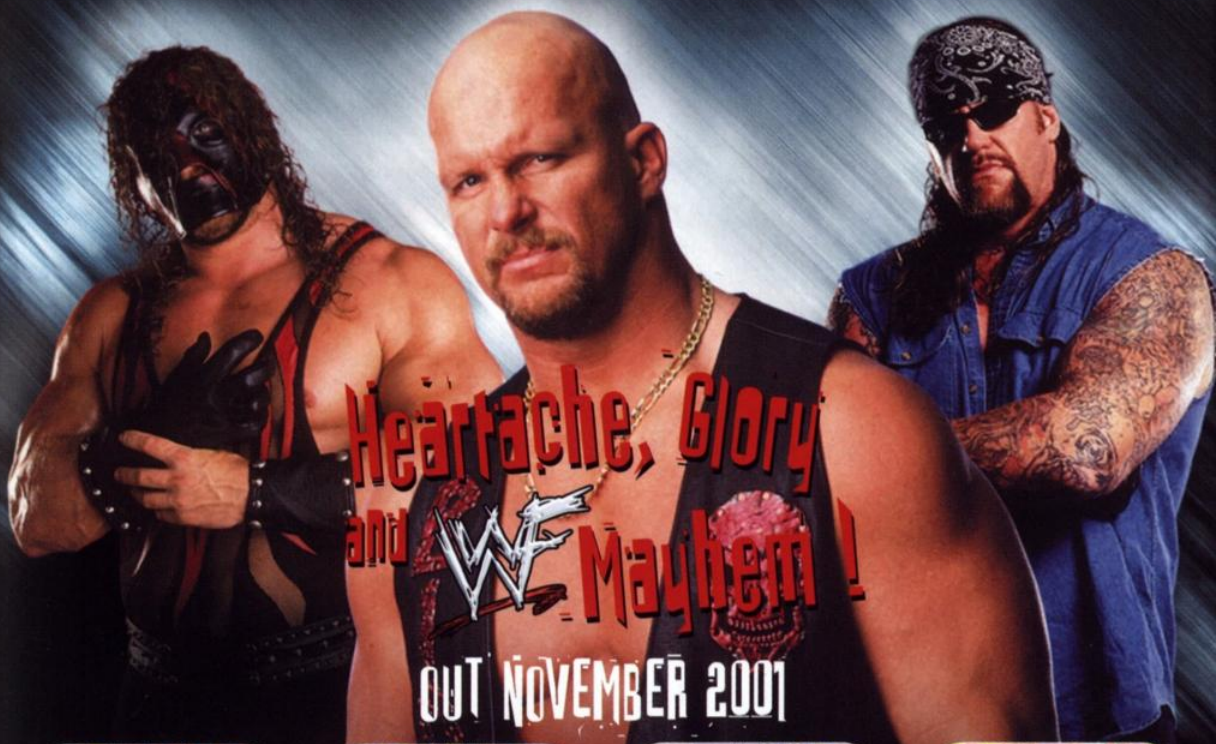
Media with passion

▶ GBA TAKEN APART!!

**JUST GOT YOUR
GAME BOY ADVANCE?**

Absolutely everything you
need to know! Page 06...

WWE ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA



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SMALL, BUT BEAUTIFULLY FORMED.

That's the Game Boy Advance.

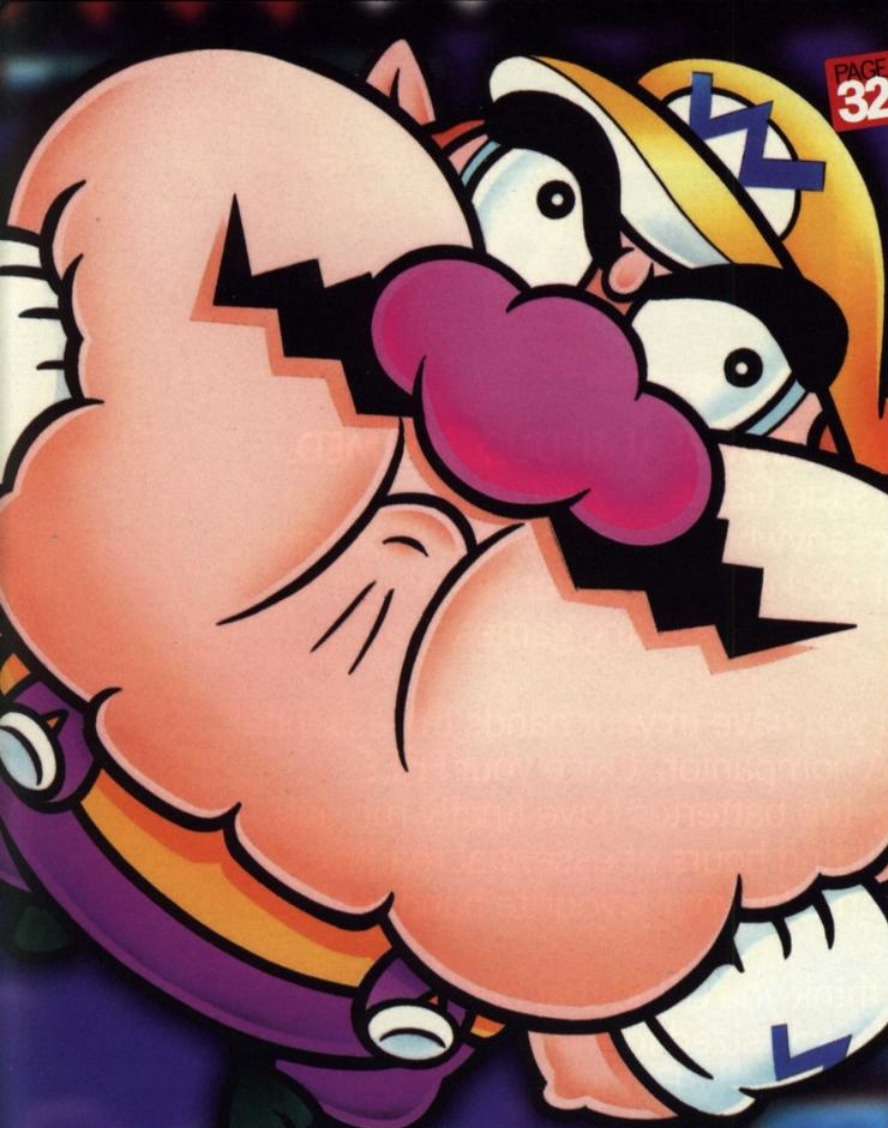
A go-anywhere machine that slips into your pocket yet is powerful enough to play truly astounding games.

And you have in your hands the essential GBA companion. Once your **FREE** long-life batteries have finally run out, you'll find hours of essential reading material for your favourite handheld.

We think you'll find that our handy, backpack-sized format compliments the GBA perfectly. But while our pages are small in size, they're big in content. We've packed in more than 50 reviews of this winter's releases, a huge Mario Kart player's guide, and all the news, previews, tips and features you could wish for.

Enjoy it.

Adam Waring,
Editor



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Reviews



ECKS VS SEVER

Bit like Doom, but with a stupid name.



DOOM

That'll be Doom then - THE DAD0Y!



WWF: ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA

Large men in tights cuddle each other. Hmmm.



STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER 2002

The best GBA foofy game yet unveiled.



MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

It doesn't get much better than this. Buy it!



HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

Wizardly RPG - Oh, the joy of specs.



SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2X X REVIVAL

Better than the SNES version - Arooogal!



SPYRO SEASON OF ICE

Proof that fire and water DOES mix!



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WARIO LAND 4

You simply must play Wario's fantastic Game Boy Advance debut! Page 32 NOW!



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At last! Sonic makes his Nintendo debut.



MARIO ADVANCE 2

The best SNES platformer ever now on GBA! Yes!



TEKKEN ADVANCE

No, this isn't a joke. It's true! Incredible!



DIDDY KONG PILOT

Check out this kaaaaazy tilt-em-up!

PLUS!

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THAT SIMPLY WE CAN'T
WAIT TO GET OUR
GRUBBY MITTS ON!



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needless to say, useful innovation - IT'S ALL
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tin: it's a GBA moment and, you
guessed it, it's classic!!!

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TONY HAWK'S 2

Every last cheat! Unlock Spiderman NOW!

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE

The hidden warps to all the worlds REVEALED!

GT ADVANCE

Take on the experts in our Time Trial challenge!

AND SHED LOADS MORE!

PLUS!



CUTOUT 'N' KEEP MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

All 40 tracks mapped
and annotated for
your kart racing
pleasure.



THE POCKET ROCKET

The best things come in small packages, they say. And as far as the GBA is concerned, they're not wrong...



Packing more fun per square inch than any console in history, the Game Boy Advance is a modern marvel of miniaturisation! Inside the pocket-sized piece of plastic is a super-powerful console that previously could only be found under the telly in your living room.

Amazingly, the original Game Boy first saw light of day in 1989. It's been improved and enhanced on the way, cutting down from four to two batteries, shedding a little bulk and, with the Game Boy Color, gaining a colour screen, but essentially it's been the same machine at heart.

The Game Boy Advance is a much more radical design, and apart from its teeny dimensions, has little in common with its older brother. The creaking 8-bit processor has been replaced with a 32-bit model. The screen is 50 percent larger, and displays thousands of colours, and the orientation has been changed with the screen in the middle, rather than at the top. A pair of shoulder buttons have also been added.

So, bigger, better more ambitious games than have ever been conceivable on a handheld. But that's not to say that all the fantastic games released for the earlier models have been forgotten – the GBA is actually two consoles in one, and has an entire Game Boy Color built in to play your old games!

TURN OVER FOR...

BOY STORY

A BRIEF
HISTORY OF
THE HANDHELD

ADVANCE



Just what makes it tick?

INSIDE INFO

We know that the Game Boy Advance is capable of running vastly more advanced games than its predecessors, but what's going in inside, exactly? We pulled our GBA to piece to find out! All we've got to do now is figure out how to put it back together again...

POWER

A big contributing factor to the Game Boy series' success is its low power consumption, lasting hours between battery changes. And despite all the advancements that make GBA such powerful kit, it ain't power-hungry. A pair of AAs will keep it going for a whopping 15 hours. And, there's no power jack - power supplies replace the battery compartment.

CPU

The ARM32 custom CPU is 32-bit - like the PlayStation, and has been beefed up considerably compared to the Game Boy's weedy 8-bit Z80. It runs at a zippy 16Mhz, and has 32K of on-board memory for intensive processing tasks.

GRAPHICS PROCESSOR

A graphics co-processor takes much of the burden from the CPU and is capable of all sorts of video tricks in hardware. While it's not capable of true 3D, it can 'fake' it by distorting bitmap images, so that they appear larger at the bottom of the screen than the top.

Here are its features:

- XY scrolling, rotational scrolling
- Sprite scaling/distortion/rotation
- 4096 sprites, with up to 256 on a single line
- Alpha blending
- Multiple planes of parallax with transparency

D-PAD AND BUTTONS

As with all Game Boys, directional control is made with the D-Pad, the A and B buttons are used for in-game controls, while Start and Select are usually used to pause the game and access menus. This time, the buttons appear on either side of the screen...

MEMORY

256K may not sound a great deal in days where megabytes is the standard measure, but this RAM is purely used as work space. The game code, graphics and so on are stored on the cart. Plus there's 32K ultra-speedy RAM built into the processor itself, 96K of video RAM and 16K of sound RAM.

"Us western folk, with our meaty paws, may find the positioning of these buttons a bit uncomfortable"

1989

IN THE REAL WORLD...

The Berlin Wall fell, author Salman Rushdie became sought-after for all the wrong reasons and Tiananmen Square was the world's most infamous open space.

Aww, look at the little fella. Game Boy was certainly a cute console when he popped into the world in 1989 (two years earlier in Japan). But he was a weak black and white baby: arriving under-powered and unimpressive, compared with his colour-screened sibling the Atari Lynx, also released. But GB had powerful parents. Nintendo had married the best bits of Game &



Watch, the LCD single-screened stocking filler, and the best-selling NES to produce the world's first true handheld console. He was cheap (about £90 would buy you a Game Boy, Tetris, link cable, batteries and earphones) and cheerful (four batteries lasted about 20 hours). A little star is born.

1990

IN THE REAL WORLD...

Nelson Mandela is freed, the world gets sweaty after banning ozone-zapping aerosols, and the Ninja Turtles make pizza cool again.

It wasn't long before Game Boy had been accepted into millions of families across the globe, regardless of whether they had kids or not. Even by this early stage, almost half of the Game Boy gamers in the western world were adults. Instead of listening to Dire Straits on their Walkmans,



businessmen were now sneaking Tetris into stuffy meetings. 1990 also saw Sega unleash the 16-bit MegaDrive. But as usual, Nintendo were in no hurry to release a rival. Their 16-bit Super Nintendo system wouldn't see the light of day over here until 1991. In the meantime, Game Boy was riding high.

SOUND

The tinny mono speaker doesn't do the 32-voice sound processor justice, you'll need to plug in a pair of headphones to truly appreciate the rich, 3D, stereo digitised sounds the machine is capable of. This is also advisable to prevent fellow passengers on the bus wrenching it out of your hands!




SHOULDER BUTTONS

The GBA now sports a pair of shoulder buttons, which add a whole new dimension to gaming. However, us Westerners, with our big meaty paws, may find the positioning of these buttons a little uncomfortable.

SPECCY FACTS

The GBA's tech specs have leapfrogged all previous Game Boys. Here's how they compare...

TECH SPECS

	 GAME BOY ADVANCE	 GAME BOY COLOR	 GAME BOY
PROCESSOR	32-bit ARM with 32K embedded memory	8-bit Z80	8-bit Z80
CLOCK SPEED	16Mhz	8Mhz	4Mhz
COLOUR PALETTE	32768	4096	4
COLOURS ON-SCREEN	32768 in bitmap mode 512 in character mode	56	4
DISPLAY	240 x 160 pixels widescreen colour TFT reflective	160 x 144 pixels colour TFT reflective	160 x 144 pixels monochrome LCD
RAM	256K, plus 96K video memory	32K	8K
LINK-UP SPEED	1140K/sec	512K/sec	8K/sec
MAXIMUM ROM SIZE	512Mbit	64Mbit	8Mbit

GAME BOY COLOR

Incredibly, you're getting two consoles for the price of one. The GBA's system architecture is different from the previous Game Boys, and so an entire Game Boy Color, complete with its own processor and memory, is tucked away inside the case. GB carts are a slightly different shape to GBA carts, and activate a switch when plugged in to switch between consoles.

DISPLAY

The reflective TFT screen is about 50 percent bigger than the Game Boy's, and has a "widescreen" format of 240 x 160 pixels. It's capable of 32,768 colours in bitmap mode, though more practical for in-game use is the 512-colour character/sprite mode.

POWER LIGHT

A neat feature this. It glows green when you've got plenty of power left, but turns red when you're down to your last couple of hours' juice, giving you plenty of warning to save your game and find a fresh pair of batteries!

1991**IN THE REAL WORLD...**

Operation Desert Storm kicks off the Gulf War (videogame designers rejoice), President Gorbachev resigns, Margaret Thatcher resigns.

No sooner was Game Boy out of nappies than a big bully arrived on the block, trying to claim his turf for itself. Sega's rival handheld, the Game Gear, boasted a backlit colour screen and graphically superior games like *Sonic the Hedgehog*. But it sucked six batteries dry in a few short hours and was as portable as a



housebrick (er, not attached to a house, obviously). Game Boy was President Bush's choice of portable entertainment when he went into hospital this year, and the console finally got the recognition it deserved when it won the UK Toy of the Year Award. Wahy!

1992**IN THE REAL WORLD...**

Bill Clinton moves into the White House (Monica buys a new dress), and a 27,000-year-old painting is found in a French cave.

Despite all the new consoles that had arrived with their 16-bit bells and whistles, the good old Game Boy kept on growing, mainly thanks to its buddy *Tetris*. In 1992 alone, a total of 32 million GBs were sold around the world, (netting Nintendo \$2 billion) thanks to the universal appeal of the block-



stacking brainbuster. The Game Boy/*Tetris* dynamic duo was powerful enough to lead a US politician to joke that the Soviets had invented it as a ploy to hypnotise Americans. The only place you couldn't find Game Boy *Tetris* was in Russia. This didn't stop a cosmonaut taking his Game Boy into orbit.

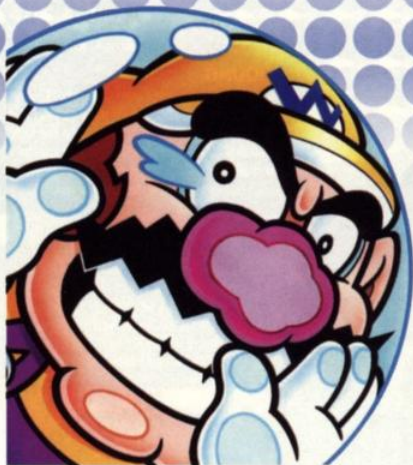
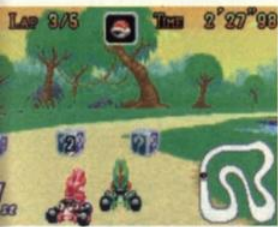
You gotta get yourself connected...

GAME ON!

When it all boils down to it, it doesn't matter how powerful the hardware is if you don't have a decent selection of games. Take the Neo Geo Color as a case in point. Launched at the same time as the Game Boy Color, it was a far more powerful machine, with a 16-bit processor compared to the GBC's eight-bits. But a set of obscure Japanese arcade conversions that no-one had ever heard of consigned it to the great videogame dustbin under a year.

Instant classics

But more powerful hardware does mean that the system is capable of better games, and no-one makes better games than Nintendo. Even so, its initial launch line-up wasn't as strong as it could have been. The obligatory Mario game, *Super Mario Advance*, wasn't his best adventure – based on the relatively obscure 15-year-old *Super Mario Bros 2*. Likewise, futuristic racer *F-Zero* may have delighted retro fans, but left others indifferent, and puzzler *Kuru Kuru Kururin* is as weird as its name suggests...



But we've since seen the release of *Mario Kart Super Circuit* and *Warioland 4* – instant classics that deserve a place in every GBA owner's collection. Third party support has also been strong, with all major publishers slaving away to some quality titles in the shops in time for Christmas. Check out *Doom*, *Spiro*, *Super Street Fighter 2 X Revival*, for proof of class titles in every genre.

The GBA excels at 2D games, and this has opened the floodgates for a deluge of retro games, from creaking arcade classics to updated SNES titles. Old skool gamers will be in retro heaven.

Size isn't everything!

It's what you do with it that counts, and despite being half the size of the already teeny GB cartridges, like Dr Who's



★ Let's talk about sticks! Don't be put off by the bland visuals, this is one devilishly addictive puzzler.

★ *Wario Land 4* is the best in the series and although not quite up to *Mazza* standards it does boast bigger characters and more detailed environments. It's a looker.

1993

IN THE REAL WORLD...

A 51-day siege comes to a tragic end at the home of cultists in Waco, Texas; and astronauts give the grubby Hubble space telescope a quick wipe with their shirts.

This year, Game Boy made a friend who would stick with him through thick and thin. Incredibly, *The Legend of Zelda: Link's Awakening* is still shifting copies today (just ask Prof. Oak) in its colour incarnation. But even in glorious monochrome it marked a new era for Game Boy games thanks to its massive challenge, great graphics



and the simple fact that it was the first Zelda you could play on the lloo. Suffice to say toilet seat sores became a global epidemic.

Thanks to *Zelda*, more Game Boys were sold this year than the dismal flops that were the Commodore CD32 and the Atari Jaguar. May they rest in pieces.

1994

IN THE REAL WORLD...

The National Lottery starts making millionaires, residents of Los Angeles suffer a major earthquake, and a comet calls in for coffee on Jupiter.

The Game Boy's fifth birthday came and went with little fuss. Millions of the little blighters were now in the hands of a major percentage of the world's population, and everyone was happy. Except Sony, who'd gone ballistic when the Game Boy was



invented – simply because they hadn't thought of it first.

A partnership to produce a CD drive for the Super Nintendo had fizzled out but the name PlayStation stuck, and in 1994 Sony joined the console war. But Game Boy was about to get much bigger... by becoming slightly smaller.



★ The mighty *Doom* is here, now with a brilliant link-up deathmatch mode!



★ A gorgeous conversion of the SNES classic, *Super Street Fighter*.

Tardis, they're really big on the inside. Typical game size is 32Mbit, compared with the average 8Mbit carts found on GBC, though they can be much bigger – theoretically anything up to a truly massive 512Mbit is possible.

So how powerful is it, exactly? Well, the 32-bit processor handles four times as much information as the old eight-bit Game Boy, and its 16MHz clock speed is twice as quick. Unlike the Game Boy's off-the-shelf Z80, the GBA's ARM CPU is specifically designed for gaming, and combined with a dedicated graphics chip with all sorts of rotation and scaling effects, estimates put the power of the GBA at around 17 times that of the GBC. Looking at regular consoles, the GBA fits in somewhere between a SNES and a PlayStation.

Plus, because the screen size is relatively small less processing work is required to keep the screen updated. This leaves the more time for the CPU to get on with the business of running the game.

3D or not 3D?

The graphics processor tucked away inside the GBA isn't capable of true 3D, but its amazing scaling and rotation capabilities and can fake 3D environments. A trick called Mode 7 distorts a flat image in such a way that it appears to go 'into' the screen, with pixels at the bottom of the image being wider than those at the top. This can be seen working to good effect in racers like *Mario Kart* and *F-Zero*.

But programmers are already breaking the rules, and first-person shooters *Doom* and *Ecks vs Sever* hint at what's possible. Here, the 3D games are constructed in software by the game engine itself, proving that the nippy 32-bit processor is very capable indeed.

And it's completely possible that we could see games released with their own 3D graphics processors built in – as happened on the SNES, with games like *Starfox*.

Who knows what the future might hold? If you were impressed by the GBA's initial batch of titles, just wait 'til the programmers have truly got to grips with the hardware! It always takes time for the best titles to appear, and so we can expect to see some truly amazing games appear over the next few years. This is just the beginning...

"It's possible that we could see games released with their own 3D graphics processors built in"

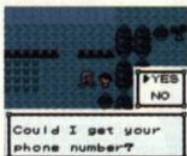
TOP GAMES TO OWN GAME BOY GAMES YOU MUST NOT MISS!

The Game Boy Advance is compatible with the entire vast back catalogue of 700-plus Game Boy and Game Boy Color games. There are some fantastic titles out there – don't miss these!



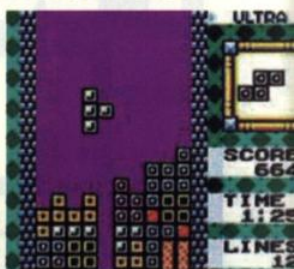
ZELDA

If role-playing games light your candle, then look no further than *Zelda*. Nintendo has just released two new *Zelda* games, *Oracle of Seasons* and *Oracle of Ages*, which cleverly allow you to take swap data between each other, taking items from one adventure and using them in the other. The original *Link's Awakening* is also worth a look...



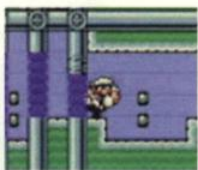
POKÉMON

You can attribute much of the Game Boy's recent sales successes to the craze that's reached hysterical proportions. This creature-collecting game features ingenious gameplay where different versions of the game have a different mix of monsters, thereby encouraging trading via a link cable. *Pokémon Crystal* is the latest – and best.



TETRIS

The famous Russian puzzler was available from launch day for the Game Boy, and still remains one of the most addictive games in the history of having fun. The original and GBC versions are actually much better value than the overcomplicated Advance-only *Tetris Worlds*...



WARIO LAND

Platformers simply don't get any better than *Wario Land*. And while the GBA has *Wario Land 4* – the best in the series yet – you'd be a fool to miss previous versions *Wario Land 2* and *3* for GBC, which show just as much game-design genius. The series has its roots the GB's *Mario Land* games, which though looking a little dated now, are still classics.



1995

IN THE REAL WORLD...

Japanese city Kobe is hit by a devastating earthquake, a bomb blows up an Oklahoma City office block, and merchant banker Nick Leeson blows millions overnight.

Game Boy was now grown up, and wanted to settle down and start a family of his own. So the Game Boy Pocket was born. The youngster was smaller, sleeker, boasted a sharper screen, dressed in different colours and was fed by just two tiny batteries. And it was a winner from the word go.



Unlike Nintendo's dodo of an idea, the Virtual Boy, which was released in Japan and the US this year. Game Boy's ugly sister was a clumsy portable 'virtual reality' headset that played 3D games in two colours – red and black – but induced screaming headaches after five minutes' use. Suffice to say it sank like a lead balloon.

1996

IN THE REAL WORLD...

Burgers go off the menu as British beef is banned because of Mad Cow Disease, gangsta rapper Tupac Shakur is shot dead, and a bomb rocks Manchester.

Game Boy's big brother – the N64 – finally saw the light of day, and it wouldn't be long before the pair became very close, thanks to the nifty Transfer Pak.

But in August the 'Boy's creator Gunpei Yokoi quit Nintendo to form his own company, disappointed at the poor reception to his Virtual Boy



invention (millions were returned, unsold). Many were sad to see the great man go, especially since he'd spent 26 years as Ninty's top boffin – inventing the entire Game Boy family and paving the way for the GB Color. But even sadder news was set to shock the gaming community in 1997.

PLUG 'N' PLAY

The Game Boy has always been a multi-player machine. Right from the release of the very first little fella in 1989 you could connect two machines together with a link cable. Of course, you needed multiple copies of the game, but there's no better way to pass a long car/train/bus journey.

The GBA has taken this a stage further, allowing link cables to be chained, and up to four players to take part in a single game. This paves the way for frantic four-way action, as already witnessed in classics *Mario Kart* and *Doom*. And because each player has their own screen, you don't have to settle for cramped split-screen views.

But even more exciting is the ability to play multi-player games with just one cart! The host GBA downloads the necessary code directly to the other players over the link cable. This is usually a cut-down version of the main game – in *Mario Kart*, for example, the single-cart multi-player mode is limited to the four most basic tracks with all players racing as different-coloured Yoshis. When all players have a copy of the game, they can race as any character on any track.

Add it on

Nintendo has always been an innovator for add-ons. The Game Boy had the Game Boy Camera and Printer, and while nothing's yet been confirmed, we're eagerly anticipating updated versions for the GBA to appear, perhaps in full colour?

One device that Nintendo has release details of is a bar code reader. No, this isn't for scanning tins of beans down at Tesco, but for reading data on trading cards! The E-card reader will be launched along with the *Pokémon E-card Trading Game*. You can play the card game in the normal way, but the data, which is encoded in strips along the side of the cards, unlock features and subgames. A Kirby E-card game is also in the works, and with the huge popularity in trading cards (there are new games for Harry Potter, and The Premier League) this should be a sure-fire success.

It's not just Nintendo beaver away on plug-in devices

"Another neat gadget is the TV tuner, which turns your GBA into a groovy portable wide screen telly"

1997

IN THE REAL WORLD...

The year most remembered for the death of Diana: Princess of Wales also saw Tony Blair take over as Prime Minister and the creation of Dolly the cloned sheep.

On October 4, Gunpei Yokoi was involved in a minor accident as a passenger in a colleague's car. When the inventor and his friend inspected the damage, they were hit by another vehicle, and Yokoi was killed. At the time, Game Boy's success seemed like it had



reached its peak but his creator's legacy was to live on, thanks to a curious little game featuring 151 cute creatures. *Pokémon's* pure playability single-handedly saved Game Boy from the digital doldrums. First Japan, next stop: the world.

1998

IN THE REAL WORLD...

President Clinton denies (but later admits) an affair with White House worker Monica Lewinsky, Europe agrees on a single currency.

By now, Game Boy was getting on for a decade old and the grey hair was beginning to show. Time for some colour! The new Game Boy Color could display 65 colours from a choice of 4096 (old Game Boy managed four!), was faster, clearer and even boasted an infrared system. And best of all, it played all 450



existing black and white games – in glorious colour. And the gadgets kept coming. The Game Boy Camera and Printer sold like gold-plated hotcakes and *Pokémon* was still spreading like a nasty rash. Monochrome rivals, the WonderSwan (partly invented by Gunpei Yokoi) and Neo Geo Pocket never made it out of Japan. Hal!

A GUIDE TO THE MOST POPULAR GAMES CONSOLE IN THE WORLD!



doesn't have the feature we'd really like to see – the ability to take part in multi-player games over the Net. One day...

Another neat gadget in the works, this time from Kemco, is a TV tuner, which turns your GBA into a portable telly – and a widescreen one at that! As well as receiving pictures through an aerial, you can plug in external video sources, so in theory you could play PlayStation or N64 games on your Game Boy!

The ultimate peripheral

Just launched in the US and Japan, and available in the UK in Spring 2002, is Nintendo's newest console, the Game Cube. This 128-bit monster is the most advanced games console ever, and unlike its rival next-generation systems, Sony's PS2 and Microsoft's oversized X-Box, it's dedicated purely to game. Yes!

In a stroke of Nintendo genius, you'll be able to plug the GBA directly into the Game Cube, with the handheld taking place of the controller. The implications are enormous – multi-player games could have secret data on your GBA, while the main action, takes place on the TV screen. This would work brilliantly in games like *Pokémon Stadium*, where you need to select your fighting moves secretly.

Nintendo has already announced a couple of titles that will use this feature. A new Kirby game, *Koro Koro Kirby*, has an ingenious tilt cartridge, which senses the movements of the GBA and moves the character accordingly. When plugged into the Game Cube, the tilting of the controller is reflected in full 3D on the main screen, with Kirby rolling around stunning-looking mazes. But – and this is the clever bit – roll into a gutter and he 'drops' into the GBA. You continue the game on the small screen, popping back onto the Game Cube when you've finished your task – both versions will be vital to complete the game, and we may well see them sold together. *Animal Forest* works in a different, but equally clever way. Playing the main game on the Game Cube, you can take your character to special locations, such as a secret island reached by boat, hop off the boat and onto the island and, quite literally, you hop onto the Advance. You can then unplug the GBA, complete the subtasks and plug in again.

Sega, once Nintendo's arch-rival, are planning a similar sort of connectivity with *Sonic Adventure 2*. As you play the game on the Game Cube, you can collect Chaos Creatures and transfer them to your GBA to be raised and nurtured, before returning them to the main game.

This interconnectivity could be Nintendo's secret weapon in the next-gen console war. The GBA is already a runaway success. It could ensure the success of the Game Cube, too. ➔



★ **The E-Card Reader.** Scan secret info from new Pokémon, Harry Potter and Premiership (and loads more) CCGs. Magic.



★ **GBA TV adaptor.** Transform your GBA into a gorgeous widescreen (although slightly dark) TV!



★ **Datel's ingenious World Port GBX – allows you to send and receive emails on your GBA.**

for your Game Boy. Datel Electronics, the boffins behind the Action

Replay cheat cartridges that have appeared for just about every console ever released since the history of time, aren't leaving the GBA out. Action Replay GBX plugs into the cartridge slot, and then the game cart fits into the Action Replay. You can then enter all sorts of cheat codes – such as extra lives, unlimited weapons and level skips. It comes pre-loaded with cheats for popular games, and you can get cheats for new games direct from a special website (www.codejunkies.com). You can even link the GBA to a PC and download direct to the cartridge.

Also from Datel is the World Port GBX, which hooks your GBA to the Internet through a regular phone line. You can compose, send and receive emails using an on-screen keyboard, and you pay for your online time through a voucher system, similar to that used for mobile phones. You can't actually view web pages, though, which is a shame, and it

1999

IN THE REAL WORLD...

American schoolkids with weapons lead to a ban on videogame light guns; scientists discover two new elements (not Pokémon Gold and Silver).

Pokémon fever finally hit Britain, and Pikachu and chums boosted Game Boy into its most successful period so far. Sega released the Dreamcast, complete with a distinctly Game Boy-like memory card, the VMU. The nearest rival to the GB yet, the Neo Geo



Pocket Color, arrived on its very brief stint in the Western world. (It was to last little more than six months.) And rumours began to fly of a 32-bit successor to the Game Boy family, codenamed Atlantis. Here comes the storm!

2000

IN THE REAL WORLD...

The world recovers from the New Year partying, Concorde gets grounded after its first crash, George W Bush (barely) becomes US president.

This year saw some of the most amazing big name games released for the Color, including *Donkey Kong Country*, *Cannon Fodder*, *Tomb Raider* and *Metal Gear Solid*. Rival portables reared their ugly heads, such as Sony's PSone, and the WonderSwan Color (only in Japan) but these paled in



comparison when the world got its first glimpse of Nintendo's gorgeous new baby – the Game Boy Advance. Barely bigger than a GBC but more powerful than a SNES, the GBA had game developers jumping aboard. Sadly this signalled retirement plans for the original Game Boy. But what a life it's been!

A slice of Nintendo history...

GB FAMILY TREE



Game Boy (b.1989)

It may look chunky now but the original mono Game Boy was a mobile gamer's dream come true in its heyday.



Game & Watch (b.1980)

Now highly collectible, these pocket-sized LCD-screened cuties were first to feature portable versions of Donkey Kong and Mario.



NES (b.1985)

The Nintendo Entertainment System never took off over here but was the springboard for classics like Super Mario, Metroid and Zelda.



Virtual Boy

(b.1995, Japan & US only)
In a rare moment of stupidity, Game Boy's creator released this migraine inducing 3D headset. It became the Titanic of portable gaming.



Game Boy Pocket (b.1995)

Smaller, lighter, less battery-hungry - the Pocket was also the first Game Boy to come in a variety of fruity colours.



Super Game Boy (b.1994)

A blessing for the shortsighted, this device allowed you to play Game Boy games on a telly via the SNES.



SNES (b.1992)

Ninty's 16-bit baby was technically superior to Sega's Megadrive, but came second in the marketing battle.



Game Boy Camera (b.1998)

Budding David Baileys could now compose their own arty farty photography. Then stick silly ears on it.



Game Boy Light

(b.1998, Japan only)
Basically a GB Pocket with a glowing backlight, this cool gadget was exclusive to its Japanese homeland. Pity.



Game Boy Color

(b.1998)
A smart colour screen and groovy coloured cases made the GBC the ultimate fashion accessory for gamers on the go.

Game data transferred from Game Boy to N64 via a Transfer Pak



N64 (b.1996)

Once again, Nintendo had the most advanced console, once again it was outmarketed, this time by Sony.



Game Boy Printer (b.1998)

Print out your camera creations or transfer your Pokédex to paper, then stick em on the fridge.



Game Boy Advance (b.2001)

A revolution in handheld gaming, the GBA is the best thing for having fun on the run since they sliced silicon.



Game Boy Advance (b.2001)

Much of the Game Boy's fortunes depend on its interconnectivity with the GBA.

2001

IN THE REAL WORLD...

Advance, the only Game Boy Advance magazine you'll ever need hits newsagent shelves. But you knew that already.

The Game Boy Advance is born, and instantly becomes the most successful console launch in history. More powerful than its ancestor, it nevertheless builds on the best the GB had to offer - long battery life, link-up capability, diminutive proportions, it's set to continue



the dynasty for years. And, best of all, the newcomer won't forget the family tradition because it can play all old GB games - even that original 1989 copy of Tetris! Who knows what the future holds? In 10 years' time, we may be playing 128-bit games on a system the size of a thimble.

They Tried, They Failed...

In the GB's 12 years on this planet, more than ten other handhelds have tried and failed to claim its crown. Some, like the Atari Lynx and Sega Game Gear, attempted to beat the GB on looks alone, opting for backlit colour screens and classier graphics. But you needed a Duracell factory-full of batteries and pockets the size of South America. Others relied on gadgety gimmicks, such as the ridiculous R-Zone which comprised a headband with a flip down eyepiece for a screen. Erk. To be fair, some rivals simply didn't stand a chance against the sheer popularity of Game Boy and its mountain of cracking carts. Like the Neo Geo Pocket: a great 16-bit system let down by a library of games that no one (at least in the UK) had ever heard of. Japan is the only country where Game Boy still faces opposition. But something tells us that a handheld named after an electronic duck (WonderSwan?) won't give Advance much reason to worry.

GAME GRAVEYARD

- Lynx ■ Atari, 1989
- Game Gear ■ Sega, 1991
- TurboExpress ■ NEC, 1991
- R-Zone Head Gear ■ Tiger, 1995
- Nomad ■ Sega, 1995
- R-Zone Super Screen ■ Tiger, 1996
- R-Zone XPG ■ Tiger, 1997
- Neo Geo Pocket ■ SNK, 1998
- Neo Geo Pocket Color ■ SNK, 1999
- WonderSwan ■ Bandai, 1999
- Game.com ■ Tiger, 1999
- WonderSwan Color ■ Bandai, 2000



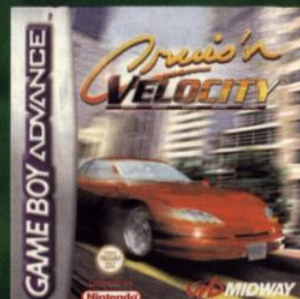
ADVANCE





Midway's
GREATEST
Arcade Hits



Crisis's
VELOCITY



GAME BOY ADVANCE™



ADVANCE

NEWS

Hot GBA facts forced through the chubby pipe called print...

We decided to get the best price possible by not introducing a backlit screen

David Gosen Sales and Marketing, Nintendo

NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS

LET THERE BE LIGHT!



Wanna play GBA under the covers late at night? Right you are...

★ This shot was taken in a pitch black room! The man's a genius! Assuming it actually works.

Let's face it, the GBA is a tiny marvel of a machine – more powerful than a SNES in fact – but it is flawed. This gorgeous miracle of technology is rubbish in low light. There, we said it (about time someone did). But while we squint like Mr Magoo and whinge gently on a midnight scramble through *Wario 4*, one man is on a crusade to do something about it... Adam Curtis, a US engineering student, began to research the possibilities of lighting the GBA internally on June 15th of this year and launched a website detailing his "crusade against Nintendo's poor choices in product design" on the same day. Harsh words, but an intriguing story.

And after five months he's almost done it! He's designed an amazing GBA internal light! The process is complicated, but put simply, the unit is taken apart, two LED strips are placed either side of the screen but, crucially, below the reflective screen protector, a bit of soldering is performed and the unit is put back together again.

Obviously this process knackers the warranty and is not something we in any way endorse, but if you're willing to take the gamble Adam's project should be complete by the time you read this and kits containing the frontlight assembly, a ribbon-cable connector, two wires, an on/off switch and tutorial document should be available at the website below. The cost of the kit still hadn't been finalised at time of going to press. ●

SCOOP
LIGHT UP
YOUR GBA!

★ *Advance Magazine in no way endorses ever taking your GBA apart. The risks of knackerage are high and your warranty will no longer be valid. So there.*

www.portablemonopoly.com



ADVANCE

Andy Dyer Editor, PlayStation Max Magazine

Mario Kart review *Advance* page 56

VS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ NEWS ■ N

A month in numberful nuggets – handy, snack-sized Game Boy Advance factoids in a digit bits listette...

500

thousand Game Boy Advance consoles were sold across Europe after one week of launch.

3

million Game Boy Advance consoles will have been sold across Europe by Xmas 2001.

4662

The number of Statue of Libertys that would be dwarfed by the height of three million GBAs.

108

The number of laps of Indianapolis 500 track three million GBAs would stretch around.

105

Game Boy Advance games featured in issue one of *Advance* (yes, the one you're holding).

1

Game Boy Advance console is sold somewhere in the world every five seconds.



A NEW KIND OF **MAG!**

The only Game Boy Advance mag
you'll ever need (until issue 02)!

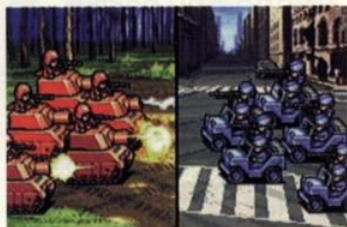
You are holding in your hands the first ever copy of *Advance*, the handy, 'bung it in yer bag', info-jammed, games-ridden, Nintendo

nuts Game Boy Advance bible. Good, isn't it?
If you've just got your GBA (about time, where were you?) or you've been enjoying its delights for a good few months now, *Advance* has been designed to deliver everything you need to know about the cleverest bit of gaming kit in the world: What game to buy next, what to look out for, how to win, how to cheat, challenges that really test you, and which add-on kit to get.

But why buy any magazine you ask? GBA is the take anywhere machine and we want this mag to sit right alongside your GBA wherever you go. If you see a bargain game, whip out *Advance* and check the score in our reviews roundup on page 98, if your mate challenges you to a link-up, excuse yourself for a minute and rifle through our tips and cheats section for fast advice on how to win every time. And as if that wasn't enough, UK readers get £5 off any game (page 19) and free set high power GBA batteries. This is the ultimate GBA package.

Everything you need for better GBA gaming is right here – keep *Advance* on you always.

BARGAINS...
£5 OFF ANY
GBA GAME
go to page 19



★ A firm favourite in the Advance office and a 'must buy' when released. Reviewed next issue.

ADVANCE WARS DELAYED!

Sadly, due to the events of September 11th, Nintendo have taken the decision to delay the UK release of the thematically sensitive *Advance Wars* until further notice.

Advance Wars is one of the stand out games on GBA – take it from us, we've reviewed it but will hold it over until issue two – thanks to its mix of compelling brain-ache, addictive strategy and cunning AI. Understanding as we are, we can't help feeling a little hard done by as it's out in Japan and America. Worth waiting for though.



★ Are you reading Nintendo? The Advance team demand development of *Stunt Race FX* GBA.

STUNT RACE FX PLEASE!!

The Advance team were planning a Ten Most Wanted GBA Conversions list in this particular corner of News, but after a lengthy discussion one game emerged at the top of everybody's wish list – that game was *Stunt Race FX*. Coming towards the end of the SNES's lifespan, *Stunt*

Race was overlooked by many, but remains a landmark racer to this day. Think *Ridge Racer* meets *Virtua Racer* meets *Mario Kart*. Super, quick, massively addictive and ripe for GBA conversion. And soon. So, Nintendo, get converting – we want *Stunt Race FX* on our GBA by this time next year. Long enough? Good.

WHAT'S SELLING WHAT?

CHARTS

Top 10 GBA movers and shakers



★ *Mario Kart Super Circuit* still reigns supreme at the top of the official Game Boy Advance chart – exactly where it should be too!



CHART POSITION	GAME NAME	ChartTrack	GAME PRICE	ADVANCE RATING
→ 1	 MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT		£34.99	95%
	Superb fusion between the SNES and N64 classics. Boasting 40 tracks and four-player link-up, this is GBA's best game so far.			
→ 2	 SUPER MARIO ADVANCE		£34.99	89%
	A conversion of arguably the weakest Mario game in the series, yet still far and away the finest GBA platformer yet.			
↑ 3	 SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 X REVIVAL		£34.99	90%
	Just like having the arcade machine in your pocket. As great to play now as it ever was. Well worth the investment.			
↓ 4	 RAYMAN ADVANCE		£34.99	80%
	Gob-smackingly gorgeous to look at but somehow lacking the spark or the soul of 'great' platformers.			
↓ 5	 TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2		£34.99	91%
	Illustrating the power of GBA perfectly, great looks, dazzling sounds and stunt-tastically addictive gameplay.			
↑ 6	 ATLANTIS THE LOST EMPIRE		£34.99	55%
	Just another addition to the growing tide of barely distinguishable platformers that threatens to swamp GBA.			
↓ 7	 SPIDER-MAN MYSTERIOS MENACE		£34.99	90%
	This really is fantastic stuff, offering tons of rock hard and beautifully designed levels. Buy it.			
↑ 8	 TWEETY AND THE MAGIC GEMS		£34.99	70%
	Sub-standard pocket variation on the Mario Party theme. A nice attempt and certainly cute, but where's the fun?			
→ 9	 GT ADVANCE CHAMPIONSHIP		£34.99	87%
	<i>Gran Turismo</i> in your pocket, not quite, but a thoroughly engaging and ambitious racer. No <i>Mazda Kart</i> but what is?			
↓ 10	 X-MEN REIGN OF APOCALYPSE		£34.99	73%
	A <i>Final Fight</i> style brawler which is tidy enough, but not the best X-Men title around and where's the variety?			

KEY: ↑ Moving up ↓ Slipping down → Non-mover ★ New entry



ADVANCE TELEVISION!

Yes! The Game Boy Advance is getting groovy, self-standing TV adaptor add-on courtesy of those boffins at Kemco. That's the good news, but wait...

No there's not a gersquillion quid price tag attached to this potentially essential bit of kit, the problem is that Kemco simply refuse to tell us when the TV Boy coming or how much it is.

Still, here's what they have shared with us: it has a digital tuner (no, sadly not digital terrestrial), an RCA jack (for connection of camcorders,



★ **Ideal for watching World Cup 2002 in bed next summer. Give us a price now Kemco!**

videos, DVD players etc), and the whole unit acts as a flexible stand for precise screen angling. Er, and that's it. The teasers!

Currently the TV Boy is due to come in two flavours, orange and white, and requires its own batteries (just as well we've given you a couple of spares). More next issue. ●



★ **Mortal Kombat just wouldn't be Mortal Kombat without stupid amounts of blood. Yeah!**

MORTAL KOMBAT GBA

As Advance was going to press, first shots emerged of this tasty old skool fighter. So we thought we'd give you a glimpse.

Mortal Kombat Advance is a port of the arcade *Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3* and very tasty it's looking too. So far, link cable support for two

players has been announced and, er, not a lot else. But from the screens we've uncovered all the fatalities, gore, friendships and most characters are present. Top.

WANT MORE... ADVANCE BEAT-'EM-UPS? go to page 72

WEB WATCH!

Need the very latest GBA pics, gossip & cheats now, now, NOW?!!

YOUR DAILY GBA FIX

<http://www.gamesradar.co.uk>

The UK's leading multi-format games website is the premier source for all things GBA. First shots, previews, reviews, features, cheats - it's all here. And you can catch up on GameCube developments too.



THE QUEST FOR LIGHT

<http://www.portablemonopoly.com>

We've said it once (page 16) and we'll say it again, our beloved GBA is flawed. The screen is too reflective and not backlit. Are you as angered as we are? Then follow one man's bizarre quest to redesign GBA.

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MAD FOR NINTENDO?

Can't wait for the next issue of *Advance*? Anxious for another fix of Nintendo goodness? We've got just the thing. *NGC Magazine*, *Advance*'s sister mag, is your premier source for info on GameCube, GBA's bigger, boxier brother. Between the covers, you'll find 100 pages choc-a-block with

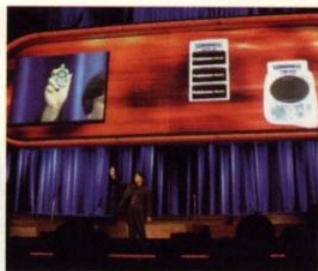
news, gossip, exclusive previews, and embarrassingly large reviews – and there's a separate section dedicated to all things Game Boy, including the near-endless possibilities thrown up by the GameCube-GBA link cable. *NGC Magazine*: just £3.30, and out every four weeks. Get to it!



POKÉMON MINI SOON!

Nintendo surprised the gaming world by bringing forward the release of their Pokémon Mini console in the US from early 2002 to November 14th to coincide with the grand opening of their Pokémon centre in New York. Ninty in early hardware shocker!

This keyring-sized beauty is similar to the Pocket Pikachu released a few years ago, but with stacks of extra features: D-pad, three 'action' buttons and a power and reset button. There's also a nifty infrared port allowing you to swap data with a



★ Pokémon Mini's debut is the first time Ninty have unveiled new hardware in London.

fellow player from up to, er, two and a half feet away.

This is so cute! The base unit come pre-loaded with *Pokémon Party Mini* (think *Game and Watch Mario Party*) while other tiny carts will also be available for approx £10 – currently, *Pokémon Pinball Mini*, *Pokémon Puzzle Collection* and *Pokémon Zany Card*.

Yes, the games are simplistic and the screen resolution is a paltry 96x64, but don't you just want one anyway?

Pokémon Mini has been brought forward(ish) in the UK from Spring 2002 to early 2002. That's cleared that up then. ●



ADVANCE

THE GAME BOY ADVANCE MAGAZINE

WH
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PREVIEWS!



FROM: SEGA OUT: AUTUMN 2002

ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

SEGA'S MASCOT ON A NINTENDO CONSOLE

BELIEVE YOUR EYES!

Who'd have thought it eh? After repeated mistakes on Sega's part – bringing about the early demise of every platform released after the Mega Drive – the impossible has happened. Despite being at each other's throats for the last decade, Sega have packed in the hardware business and buried the hatchet with arch rivals, Nintendo. One of the fruits of this decision is Sega's forthcoming release of *Sonic the Hedgehog* for Ninty's new handheld – and it's shaping up to be one remarkable game. From what we've seen and played so far, the basic ingredients for *Sonic Advance*'s single-player are comfortingly familiar. It's basically a super-fast 2D platformer much like the 16-Bit games, only this time Sonic is joined by some faithful old friends. Tails, Knuckles and Amy are all in attendance to assist you in defeating the

evil egg-man Dr Robotnik. As you'd expect, those elusive and powerful Chaos Emeralds are the object of Sonic and Co's affection and in order to find them, you'll need to hurl yourself around corkscrews, loops and up and down stomach-churning slopes. Thrown into the mix are fans, pinball bouncers and springs to help keep the action furiously frenetic, your eyes constantly exercised and the RSPCA more than a little worried!

So there's no surprises there then. However, Sega are keeping the proceedings decidedly fresh this time with a massive range of extras to ensure you're never left wanting. First and foremost, each character has individual skills that can be brought into play. Knuckles, for example can scale walls, while Tails the fox can use his twin-tails as rotary blades in order for

him to fly. On top of this, the characters can now hang from wires and grind down ledges, making the single-player experience far more versatile and involving than its Mega Drive counterparts. Hurrah!

Naturally though, Sega don't want you playing this beauty all on your lonesome, oh no. *Sonic Advance* promises a clutch of multi-player modes that are much more than just an after thought. Grab three mates and you'll be able to race around specially designed courses via the link-cable and only one copy of the game. Add to this a battle mode, a time trial, co-operative play and a special extra secret (see box opposite) to make sure that this will be top of your must-have list when it finally gets its European release some time next year. This is looking simply awesome. ●

"You'll need to madly hurl yourself around corkscrews, loops and up and down stomach-churning slopes"



★ Knuckles the Echidna makes a comeback too. Expect plenty off wall climbing antics off this fella.



★ Curling Sonic into a ball guarantees that he'll fly around like a hog-possessed. This is SO quick!



CHAOS BREEDS CHAOS

Recently announced by Sega was the fact that *Sonic Advance* will also be able to link up with its bigger brother, *Sonic Adventure 2*, on GameCube.

Much like the DC's Virtual Memory Unit (VMU) connectivity, the GBA will allow you to hatch and breed "Chaos" - cute little critters - via a subgame in *Sonic Advance*. Once you've trained a few up, you can transfer them to your GameCube at home, for use in some Mini-Games on the big screen. We can only imagine what Sega's full plans for this connectivity will be - but rest assured, they'll have something very special up their sleeves. ●



★ Cute Sonic sub games direct from *Sonic Adventure 2*. Better than Dreamcast's VMU efforts.



★ Interface with Game Boy Advance from GameCube's eagerly awaited *Sonic Adventure 2*.

INCOMING GAMESPY

Portable morsels from the Advance surveillance team.



BROKEN SWORD

- BAMI
- Spring 2002

One of the greatest point and click adventures ever to be created brought to the small screen with some all new artwork. Looking good.

SHINING SOUL

- SEGA
- TBA

One of Sega's finest RPG franchises gets its next installment on GBA. Expect cute-anime style artwork, huge worlds, an engrossing plot and a fantastic fighting system. Lovely.

PINBALL OF THE DEAD

- SEGA
- Spring 2002

Zombie horror miniaturised and turned into a pin-ball game? Sounds weird, yes - but Sega's pinball games always prove to be very addictive, so this could well surprise us.



GOLDEN SUN

- Nintendo
- Spring 2002

The first RPG for the Advance, and an absolute stunner it is too. Not only is it huge, but it will boast a multi-player adventure and an epic story line. Definitely one to watch.

CRASH BANDICOOT

- Vivendi
- TBA

The PlayStation's grinning orange mascot makes his debut on Nintendo's handheld - but can he topple both Mario and Wario? Time will tell...



★ To many, the best of Mazza's 2D outings – in your pocket!

FROM: NINTENDO OUT: SPRING 2002 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

MARIO'S 16-BIT CLASSIC HITS ADVANCE

Mario Advance 2 is on its way!

Widely regarded as the world's finest example of a 2D platformer and for many, one of the best games ever created, *Super Mario World* took the gaming community by storm when it was released with the SNES 10 years ago. Now, back for a new generation of lucky gamers comes *Mario Advance 2*, a pixel perfect conversion of the plucky plumber's classic platforming marathon.

If you never sampled this the first time around, then boy, are you in for a treat. Spanning a colossal 96 levels *Mario Advance 2* takes you on a journey through one of the most

cunningly designed worlds in Shiggy's gaming history in (another) attempt to rescue Princess Peach from the clutches of Bowser. On your way you'll uncover some fiendishly hidden secrets, learn vital new



★ Here's Mario at Yoshi's house, right at the start of the game. You've got a long way to go yet!

skills and fight tough bosses in one of the most genuinely demanding Mario adventures ever.

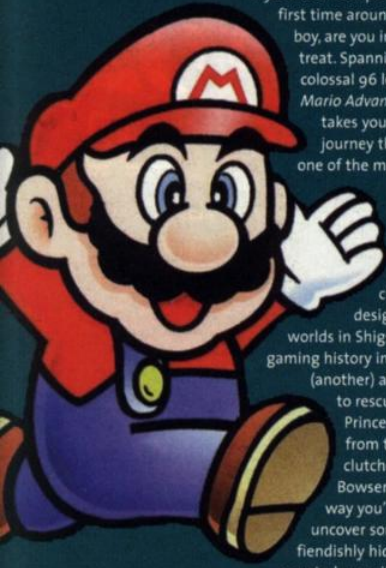
What really separates *Mario Advance 2* from any other game like it is the sheer size and difficulty of the thing. It's one of those few games that asks you to test yourself to the limit, requiring you to use your brain and all the dexterity your fingers can provide to make it through the game – especially if you want to uncover everything there is to see. Furthermore, the variation in the level design is staggering. One minute you're flying through the air with your yellow cape, the next, you're sliding down a chocolate hillside by the seat of your blue dungarees.

Needless to say then – unless something goes horribly wrong – this is a guaranteed hit. ●

★ The numerous Koopa Castles were notoriously tricky to negotiate. Go easy now.



★ Whether you're in the air on in the water, Mario offers plenty to test your skills out.



FROM: THQ OUT: WINTER 2001
ANTICIPATION: ★★☆☆

FULL THROTTLE

Moto GP

Speed is what THQ's *Moto GP* is all about, and after a few minutes of play, that's exactly what you get. This game shifts at a remarkable pace – so much so you'll need all your reflexes to cope.

Playing very much like the age-old coin op *Super Hang On*, you burn rubber along a massive selection of tracks with the aim of, er, beating your opponents. Thrown into the mix are some smart weather effects to keep you on your toes, and a variety of different single-player modes like Time Trial and Grand Prix to test your racing skills – but as yet, there's no mention of a multi-player option. ●

★ It isn't really 'true' 3D as you can't go backwards – but then when it's this fast, why would you want to?

★ The opposition frequently try to get in your way. Just make sure you don't hit them at top speed.



WINGS

- Crawfish
- TBA

The Amiga classic returns, with loads of extra missions and two perspectives, top down and first person. Should be good if the GBA can handle it.



CRAZY CHASE

- BBI
- February 2002

A bit strange this one. You're a little clown running down isometric tracks while being pursued by a variety of angry, high-speed horrors. Er... we'll have to wait and see, eh?



BREATH OF FIRE

- Capcom
- Summer 2002

Capcom's classic SNES RPG where your characters turn into dragons is due for a re-vamp and a re-release. Fans and newcomers to this series should be going mental over this – it's fantastic.



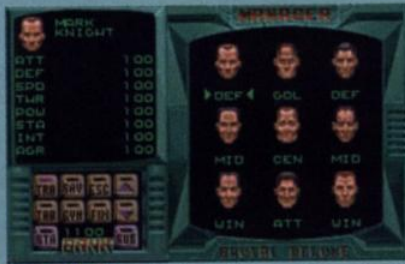
ADVANCE RALLY

- MTO
- TBA

Another top looking racer from the people who brought you the excellent *Advance GT*. Featuring real-life motors and 'realistic' handling, this should be one worth waiting for.



★ Violence is the name of the game. And Bam! wanna play the game with you!



★ By winning matches you can earn money to spend on your team to toughen them up.



FROM: BAM! OUT: SPRING 2002
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

SPORTS SIM WITH BALLS OF STEEL

Speedball 2

If you ever owned an Amiga, then this needs no introduction. One of the Bitmap Brothers' most highly acclaimed games is making its way to GBA and we simply can't wait.

Picture this if you will, you're in control of a team of hulking great brutes with one objective – pegging it around a futuristic arena, dressed in heavy duty armour and smashing steel balls into an open goal –

and your fist into the opposition's face. Yup, *Speedball 2* is back with a vengeance, and it's looking as deliciously violent and addictive now, as it did all those years ago, testament to its sheer brilliance.

Boasting more speed than is absolutely necessary and offering a high degree of depth via the ability to upgrade your squads kit, this is should become a classic.



ADVANCE PREVIEW!

FROM: RARE OUT: SPRING 2002 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

THE BIRD 'N' BEAR ARE BACK

Banjo Kazooie

That po-faced old hag Grunty is back again, and up to some serious mischief. So it's only fair that you get to take control of wise-cracking duo, Banjo and Kazooie again then isn't it?

This small-screen installment promises to deliver all of Rare's years of gaming mastery in yet another platforming tour de force. This time, the action takes place from an askewed top down perspective, lending the game a far more dynamic feel than its two-dimensional competition. As you'd expect, Jiggy and Note collecting are the order of the day as you explore the huge worlds and fight massive, imaginatively designed bosses that have become the series' trade-marks.

This one is looking very jolly. But will it feature GC connectivity? ●

★ Sneak past Wulf and nick his goodies – before running for your life back through the level.

FROM: RARE OUT: SPRING 2002 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

RARE UPDATE OF A SPECCY CLASSIC Sabrewulf

The premise for *Sabrewulf* is very simple. You're a British explorer who's on the hunt for the treasure taken by the cunning Wulf. In order to find it, you'll have to journey across side scrolling levels, using the objects you find to get to the end of the level. Each time, the sleeping Wulf will awaken to find you holding its treasure – at which point it's brown trousers time, as you try and leg it back to the safety of your tent. By placing objects and traps on your way to the Wulf, you'll hopefully scupper his chances of catching you on your way back. Very addictive and highly enjoyable. ●

FROM: SYSTEM 3 OUT: WINTER 2001 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

HIIEEEYAAHH!

International Karate Advanced

International Karate first exploded its way onto gamers' screens back in 1986, and has since appeared on just about every home computer and console released since. Now System 3 has brought the veteran martial arts sim kicking and screaming onto GBA.

Endowed with some of the most gob-smacking photo-realistic backdrops we've seen, this is the GBA's first fighter to feature three characters on screen at once – and yes, with a couple of link cables three players can take part in the mother of all punch-ups!

But with the likes of *Street Fighter Alpha 3*, *Tekken*, and *King of Fighters* also on the way, it's gonna have a hell of a battle on its hands. And feet. ●





★ This has to be seen to be believed. It does a remarkable job of playing like a 3D game.



★ You can even dodge attacks by side-stepping in or out of the screen. Very smart.

FROM: NAMCO OUT: WINTER 2001 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

FIRST 3D BRAWLER ON GBA

Tekken Advance

Now this does look promising. After a quick play of an early version at last month's Spaceworld, we were amazed at just how well the Game Boy Advance managed to handle the pseudo 3D visuals used for the conversion of one of the

PlayStation's most popular brawlers.

It's safe to say that Namco's forthcoming Tekken Advance is shaping up to be something rather special – as they've managed to capture the look and feel of the home console version perfectly. Using nine rendered versions of Namco's classic fighters, you'll be able to duke it out with the likes of Jin, Law, King and crazy skull faced samurai, Yoshimitsu. Each character is actually 2D, but they're all faithful representations of your favourites. What's more, thanks to the GBA's sprite rotation and scaling



★ If the fighters are close together the camera zooms in to the action, or backs off when the fighters are apart.

capabilities (like you see in Mario Kart) the camera will be able to zoom in and out of the action. On top of that, you'll be able to move on a number of planes – unlike say Street Fighter – thanks to the GBA's nifty background-shifting technology, so for all intents and purposes, while it's not strictly 3D, it will certainly play like it.

Unfortunately, we couldn't play the potentially brilliant two-player modes when we got our grubby mitts on it, but rest assured, Namco won't be shy when it comes to pulling out the stops for this stunning little scrapper. Thankfully you won't have long to wait either. It's slated for a November US release and our sources tell us a European street date will be hot on its heels – we can't wait. ●

INCOMING GAMESPY

FILA DECATHLON

■ THQ
■ Winter 2001
Interesting button bashing athletics sim. It actually looks the business with great animation, but it might knacker your GBA with all that pounding.



SHAUN PALMERS PRO SNOWBOARDER

■ ACTIVISION
■ December 2001
Snowy extreme sports stunt-a-thon from the people who brought you the brilliant Tony Hawk's. If it's anything like that, we won't be able to get enough of it.



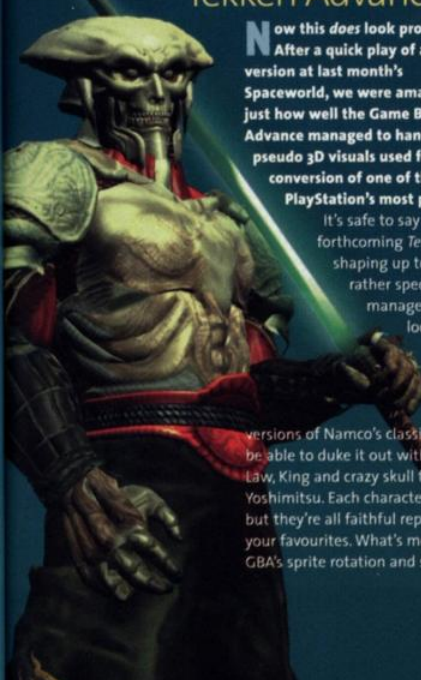
BONX RACING

■ UBI-SOFT
■ EARLY 2002
This one is totally bonkers. It's a block based puzzling racer (?) that requires you to build blocks in order to progress. It may sound weird, but it's fantastic fun.



ROBOCOP

■ TITUS
■ SPRING 2002
Classic side-scrolling platforming action, much like its 16-bit predecessors. If it turns out anything like the GBA version of Spiderman, it mightn't be so bad. Fingers crossed.





★ As you can see, Rare haven't held back with the colour palette. This really does look absolutely gorgeous.

FROM: RARE OUT: SPRING 2002 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

DIDDY K' GETS TILTING

Diddy Kong Pilot

While *Mario Kart* takes up its lonely position as the best cutesey racer on GBA, Rare's *Diddy Kong Pilot* is finally nearing completion.

As you can see it looks very much like "MK", with its bright and colourful racers and tracks, and Mode7-style 3D backgrounds, but it actually plays and handles totally differently to Nintendo's masterpiece.

First and foremost - just in case you hadn't guessed from the title - *Diddy Kong Pilot* takes place entirely in the air. You and up to six other pilots, including Donkey Kong and Kranky Kong have to guide your planes, each with varying attributes, to victory over increasingly difficult courses. Littering the fly-zones are powerups, and boost zones to help you get ahead of the pack while scuppering your opponent's chances - basically all the bits and pieces you'd expect from a kart-based racing game, only with planes.

So how does it play then? Well, so far, so good, the visuals are certainly up to scratch, with some of the courses looking like they've been ripped out of the N64 racer. It also runs at a pretty good speed, especially when you get to the latter races. The thing that really got us going though, was Rare's addition of the 'Tilt Technology', which allows you to control the game by moving the actual GBA itself rather than using the D-Pad. From what we saw, it all worked rather well, but we do have our reservations about the screens visibility if you're moving the unit too much. Still, time will tell, eh... ●



★ What racer would be complete without a battle mode? These dog-fights are great.



★ All the usual racing motifs are here, from the cheeky power-ups to the speed boosts.



★ Rare just love their snow levels, and fire levels and sand levels...

FROM: RED STORM OUT: SPRING 2002 ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

TEAM BASED TACTICS AND ESPIONAGE

Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear



The *Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear* games have always been well received. With their subtle blend of strategy and stealth, and their dependency on team play, it's not hard to see why the game has its many fans. Unfortunately, this was pretty much lost on the Game Boy Colour – but this looks set to be rectified with the release of this new handheld installment.

Thanks to the GBA's improved technology and link up capability, you

★ There are loads of missions to get stuck into, each with their own specific goals.

★ You'll be heavily outnumbered, so just wading in guns blazing will probably just get you killed.



★ The multiplayer modes could really make this a stand out title.

can expect far more detailed top-down visuals, as you guide your squad of crack-troops around extensive top-down levels. Drawing on your gray matter, you'll need to battle it out over dozens of single-player missions in attempt to rescue hostages from terrorists and root out enemies inside high-security military installations.

Coupled with both co-op and counter-operative multiplayer games, this will prove to be a pleasant diversion from the usual titles out there. Nice. ●

BARBARIAN

■ TITUS

■ TBA

Classic retro one-on-one battling with hulking great brutes and scantily clad valkaries. You can even chop people's heads off... which is nice.



POCKET MUSIC

■ RAGE

■ December 2001

Excellent music maker with a similar interface to software like E-Jay. Surprisingly, the sounds and samples are pretty good quality. Smart.

BOXING FEVER

■ Majesco

■ Spring 2002

A cartoony boxing game, but viewed through the eyes of your chosen character. Normally these games are rubbish – but this both looks and plays like a dream, especially in two-player.

CAR BATTLER GO

■ Victor Interactive

■ TBA

We played this at Spaceworld and it was one of the most ignored titles there – a shame, because it was brilliant. Construct yourself a motor, whack a whopping great big gun on the bonnet and shoot your mates. Pure Class.

NBA JAM 2002

■ Acclaim

■ Spring 2002

Just you, a bunch of lanky freaks in sweaty vests, a rubber ball and some hoops with a net around them. Sounds like Basketball to us, and has absolutely nothing to do with fruity preserves.

FROM: GRAPHIC STATE GAMES OUT: TBA ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

BLINDING 3D SHOOTER REVEALED

Star Fight

Well, well – this is a surprise. They said that the Game Boy Advance 'couldn't' do polygons, but if Graphic State Games have anything to do with it, the GBA will 'do' as many as it darn well pleases.

Star Fight already looks fantastic, featuring beautiful, fully 3D landscapes sculpted from shaded and texture polygons. Obvious comparisons will be made to *Star Fox* on the SNES and this would be

justified to some extent. Only, *Star Fight* looks so much better it's unbelievable.

Unfortunately, little is known about the game's gameplay style. We can't quite figure out whether the action will take place on a predetermined path, or whether it will have a free-roaming enclosed environment to play in.

Anyway, until we find out more, just check out these shots – and drool all over your new shoes. ●



★ Just how they've managed it we don't know, but hats off for giving it a go we reckon.

★ If it runs as well as it looks then this is going to be huge. Just imagine, 3D blasting in the palm of your hand.

★ Will the action take place 'on rails' or is this to be a delicious free-roaming affair? Place your bets.



★ Bring a second player into the game and this classic really comes into its own. Gaming heaven.

FROM: BAM OUT: SUMMER 2002

ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

START YOUR ENGINES

Chaos Engine

Another retro-classic for you here folks, and again, it's another gaming masterpiece from the Bitmap Brothers. Along with *Speedball 2* you can also look forward to one of the finest Amiga shooters ever – *Chaos Engine*.

This top down blaster is one of the most relentless and addictive games you'll ever encounter, and it's rock solid to boot. Playable with one or two people, you choose from a team of six differently skilled mercenaries. Once selected, it's a case of survival as you traverse the levels armed to the teeth with the mega-death weaponry needed to blast your way through hordes of incoming mutants.

Combining arcade-style gameplay, puzzle elements and treasure hunting, this is one of the most incredibly designed shooters ever created, and a classic in every sense of the word. ●



★ Each character has their own set of skills, so a careful and considered choice is important at the start.



★ The dramatic battle sees three fighters scrapping it out for superiority – fantastic.

FROM: CAPCOM OUT: SPRING 2002

ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

CAPCOM'S FINEST UNLEASHED

Street Fighter Alpha 3



In terms of size, *Street Fighter Alpha 3* is one of the biggest beat-em-ups in existence. With a roster that weighs in at over 30 fighters this will take some serious beating.

Still, size isn't everything, so you'll be glad to hear that gameplay-wise *Alpha 3* is one of the most comprehensive battles ever. With one of the best fighting systems Capcom have created, it's a frenzied combo-master's dream. Visually it isn't lacking either – as it looks nearly identical to its

Dreamcast cousin, which is no mean feat for the GBA's tiny processor. The best thing though, is the wealth of options available. Not only can you train-up one of the existing characters via the games 'World-Tour' mode, but there are also insane survival battles to get through and an inspired

two-on-one, 'Dramatic Battle' mode to unlock. Yes! ●



★ We're not sure how they've done it, but this is looking almost identical to the DC version!

FROM: NINTENDO OUT: TBA
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

MANA MAKER'S MAGIC

Magical Vacation

RPG fans are going to love this. From the developers who brought you the superb *Mana* series on the SNES comes *Magical Vacation*, a very similar looking RPG/Adventure, that promises to be one of the biggest yet.

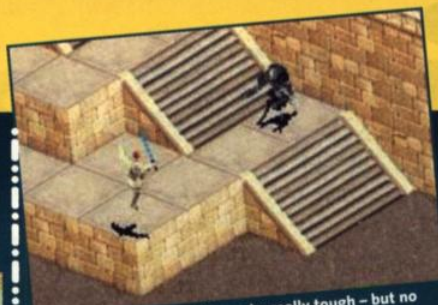
Using a very similar, pastel shaded anime



★ Some of the scenery is the best we've ever seen on GBA – check out the sunset.

style from the *Mana* games, it's up to you to guide your party of apprentice sorcerers through a parallel dimension. As you'd expect, stat building and item finding is the order of the day, and if we're especially lucky – a chance to play the adventure with an extra human player too! ●

★ The game-world promises to be absolutely massive.



★ These federation droids can be really tough – but no match for Obi-Wan's lightsabre.

FROM: THQ OUT: TBA
ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

FEEL THE FORCE

Jedi Power Battles

We've been waiting for *Jedi Power Battles* for what seems like ages, but it still refuses to make an appearance. Grrrrr.

Set at the same time as Episode 1, it requires you to choose from one of three Jedis (Obi-Wan, Qui-gon and Mace Windu) and guide them through 10 tough isometric levels, battling the evil Federation invaders as you go. Locations range from the swamps of Naboo to the dusty plains of Tatooine. Along the way you'll be called on to use a range of power-ups and your own Jedi skills.

Even though the home console versions were a bit rubbish, this actually looks pretty good. ●

FLINTSTONES

■ BBI
■ December 2001
Join the infamous caveman and his strangely alluring wife and romp around on platforms collecting stuff on your way to a show down with the worryingly named, Dr Sinister. Lets hope it's better animated than the ancient cartoon.

GUILTY GEAR X

■ Sammy
■ TBA
Superb conversion of one of the Dreamcast and Arcade's finest fighting games, complete with some refreshingly original features. No news on a release date yet, but we're keeping a keen eye on this little one.



POWER PRO TENNIS

■ KONAMI
■ Spring 2002
Tennis games have always worked really well on handhelds, so the fact that Konami are bringing one to GBA is great news. Best of all though, is the fact that a four-way link up is inevitable and it looks and plays very much like Nintendo's *Super Tennis* on the SNES. Hooray!



VIRTUAL KASPAROV

■ VIRGIN
■ January 2002
It's chess. Kasparov has endorsed it, but obviously only appears in a virtual capacity. It does exactly what it says on the tin (or, er box).



FROM: SNK OUT: TBA ANTICIPATION: ★★★★★

SNK IS KING

King Of Fighters

SNK, arch rivals of Capcom have been churning out high-quality scrappers for many years now, so to underestimate *King of Fighters* would be a very bad idea, as it could easily topple the competition as the GBA's premier beat-em-up.

Very much in the same vein as *Street Fighter*'s 2D engine, KoF has already proved itself on the Neo Geo Pocket as well as the DC as a force to be reckoned with, and it's

not difficult to see why. Offering a depth of control and mastery often lacking in fighters, its ultra-smooth animation and superbly complicated special attacks will lend themselves very well to those who consider themselves to be among the hardcore.

It might have remained quiet for some time now, but we suspect this might just work a treat on the small screen. ●



★ The input commands for some special moves are mind-boggling, just practise.



★ SNK's scrappers may not be as pretty, but they're certainly much harder.

Reviews

The latest games reviewed
and rated. **Our advice:** Don't buy a
game until you've read this lot...

WARIO LAND 4

Wario's back in a brand new GBA adventure, but how does it compare with his past outings?

We were nearly sick with excitement when we saw a new Wario game was on its way to the GBA. After all, the series had built up a well-deserved reputation for being the best platformers on the GB and GBC, with cunningly designed

levels that, at times, had you scratching your scalp until it bled, and uncountable hours of replay value that would keep you going for weeks.

In previous *Wario* games, you learnt new abilities as the game went along, but not so here. All your different moves are available from the outset, and before you start the game proper, a small training level shows you the ropes. So Wario can bash through



★ After finding the key-bird, you'll need to hit this strange totem that opens up the level's exit. Now race to the end

REVIEWER: ADAM WARING

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ADVANCE





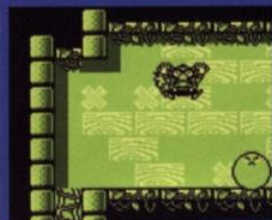
★ By using the shoulder buttons, you can send the fat funster flying headlong into enemies. Lovely.



★ There are plenty of gems in hard to reach places, so the high-score beating potential for table-ranking junkies is immense, giving Wario plenty of reasons to visit old levels.

Wario's worlds

The Wario games have a fine heritage, and you're doing yourself a disservice if you don't give his previous titles a go. Plus they're cheaper, too!



★ Wario's first outing was actually called *Super Mario Land 3: Wario Land*, released way back in 1993 for the original Game Boy. It looks distinctly dated now, but is still great fun, and is chock-full of trademark touches that distinguish Nintendo's games from other platformers.



★ *Warioland 2* had a massive 50 levels, which took the form of a story book. You only had to play through 25 to complete the game, but there were also alternative endings, and finding the routes that led to those was half the fun.



★ *Warioland 3's* 25 levels each had four treasures, making 100 to find in all. Some of these treasures gave you new skills, others combined to open up further levels. The beauty was that each had to be revisited several times to find all the treasure, maximising replay value.

Top Tip
If anything looks suspicious, it probably is. If you see a dodgy-looking wall, bash it. It may conceal a secret passage...

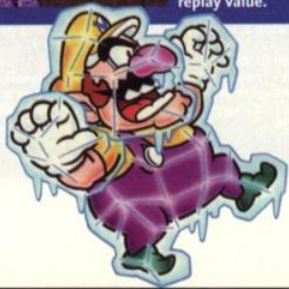
crumbling walls, smash the floor to stun enemies, pick up and throw rocks or creatures, and perform all his usual tricks from the moment you pick up the game. He also has a new running charge move for smashing through extra-tough walls, and this is accessed with the shoulder button.

Once again, Wario really has to go through the wars – he'll be squashed flat, blown up like a balloon, set on fire, and transformed into ghouls and vampire bats. But these

altered states are vital for reaching particular platforms and so completing the game.

But in a shock move, this time round Wario can actually die – in so much as if you lose all your hearts, you're ejected from the level and have to try again. Previously, no matter what painful indignities he suffered, collision with an enemy would only result him falling off the ledge and, perhaps, losing a few precious coins.

There are 16 main levels, plus the training level and a final big bad level, which is only opened up when you complete everything else. In each of these main levels, there are four basic tasks. The 16 main levels are split into groups of four, coloured red, green, blue and yellow, and in every level there are four main tasks. The first is to find a key, which will then open a door to the next level of the same



ADVANCE

33

Luscious levels

The levels are massive, beautifully drawn, and amazingly much of the background graphics are unique to each level. But despite their hugeness, you can fly through them in no time. Sadly, it's all over too quickly...



★ Get stung by the bee on the left, and Wario will inflate like a balloon and float up.

Minigame madness

The minigames have always been a great part of *Wario Land*, and there are three to try your hand at here. You gamble the cash you've collected through the game, and win tokens that can be spent on weapons for when you face the end-of-level bosses.



★ This baseball sim turns the GBA on the side. You have three attempts at hitting the ball. Time it right and you score home runs. Miss the ball or hit foul shots and you're a strike down – three strikes and it's all over.



★ In this simple game, Wario perches atop a wheel and has to jump over the obstacles that scroll on by to score points. It's trickier than it looks, and your timing has to be impeccable to get anywhere.



★ The final sub-game is the most fun, and pretty silly, too. You have a few seconds to study Wario's face, which is made up of identikit-like with eyes, nose and a mouth. Then an assortment of facial features spins around – you've got to remember the matching ones.

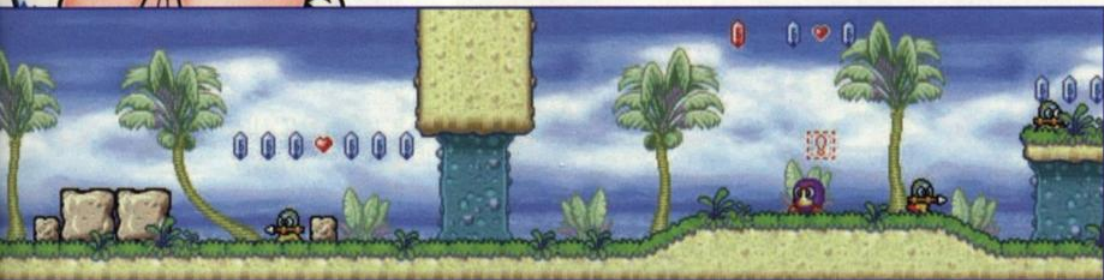
→ colour; the second is to find the four quarters of a gem, which will eventually give you access to a boss; the third is to find cunningly hidden CDs, which can be played as a bonus; and the fourth is simply to collect as much treasure as you can.

Somewhere on each level is a guardian, when you find him, jump on his head and a countdown begins. You then have just a few of minutes to find your way back to the start and exit via the warp point. Trouble is, when you thwack him, it also toggles some blocks, closing some passages and opening up others, and so you need to find an alternative route to the exit.

There's a huge amount of variety between levels, and though the basic actions are the same, the graphical style, soundtrack and overall feel of each and every one is incredibly different. One features sets of falling dominoes, where you have to race the chain reaction to thwack a button before the last domino falls, another has you hurling balls, basketball-style, into boxes to open doors to further areas of the game, another still sends a giant ghost after you to steal your key as you try and make your way back to the exit.

Unlike previous *Warios*, where some levels had you stumped for ages, we found this latest version was a little on the easy side. Finding the keys is a doddle, and so you can potentially unlock all the main levels in a few short hours. Finding the gems that open each area's boss door is only a teeny bit harder, and so it won't too long before you're battling those, either. They're tougher, but not too bad.

Previous games eked a lot of gameplay out of relatively few levels by forcing you to replay them several times to find



★ Changing Wario's state is vital to negotiating the levels – so experiment as much as you possibly can.

All the items or routes in each one. The fact that you picked up abilities as you went along meant that you couldn't sail through the game, but had to revisit them every time you gained a new skill to see how much further you could get. And while there's a certain amount of replay in this – finding the CDs can be quite taxing, for example – your first playing session will see you get through a disturbingly huge chunk of the game.

That's not to say that *Wario Land 4* is a bad game – far from it, what there is of it is fantastic, and it has a good case for being the GBA's finest platformer to date. But Nintendo had set very high standards with the previous games in the series, and this hasn't really shown the innovation that others have made, especially considering how powerful the Game Boy Advance hardware is.

When rating *Wario Land 4*, we've deliberated long and hard about whether the game is better than the previous games in the series. And we really don't think it is. But that's largely because the others were so damn good to begin with. It's an utterly fantastic platformer and deserves a place in every GBA owners collection. But once you'll beaten it, you should check out *Wario Land 2* and *3* on the GBC, because they're even better. ●



★ This skull-faced beastie will turn Wario into a Zombie, allowing him to fall through certain platforms. While this is important in some places, it's best avoided.



★ This is a beautifully rich game both graphically and in terms of level design. Lovely.

"Has a good case for being GBA's best platformer to date"



NO PAIN NO GAIN

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Superb graphics and soundtrack that changes radically for each level. A feast.

GAMEPLAY

A top-notch platformer made the way that only Nintendo know how.

LIFESPAN

You'll be glued to it until you finish, but it won't last as long as previous Warios.

DIFFICULTY

Not half as hard as its GBC counterparts, sadly. Great though.

ADVANCE OPINION

This is a sublime platformer, make no mistake, but it just ain't as involving as its predecessors.

90%



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS



Somebody call the platform police – they're remaking Pitfall again!

There are ten different environments and a few different characters to control, although you'll mostly have the use of the lead bloke Milo, who was voiced by Michael J Fox in the flick. The animation is quite good and the graphics are reasonably clear and bright. It's just so nondescript that if you took away the Disney branding it could be almost any uninspired, uninspiring platform romp. If you've owned a Game Boy or any other 2D console for any length of time, you'll know the score – climb up here, push a switch over there, ride a moving platform to collect a twinkly thing from the top of the level, then move on somewhere else. Then simply nod off.

There must be a better way of producing a Disney tie-in than knocking out another mee-too platformer. Maybe they should persuade somebody in Kyoto to do the next one. ●

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
THQ
- PHONE
020 7938 4488
- WEB
www.thq.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
Now

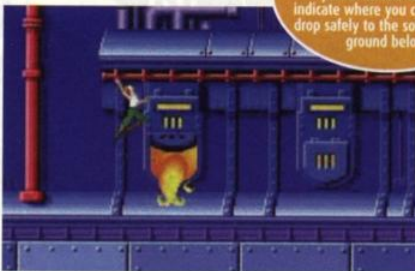
"There are those who have treated us to the sub-genre – shatform games"

There's a fine art to making a classic platform game. In a nutshell, the only guarantee of success is if the producer lives in Kyoto, works for Nintendo, and is called Miyamoto. Others have created competent and clever efforts and there are those who have treated us to the sub-genre – shatform games.

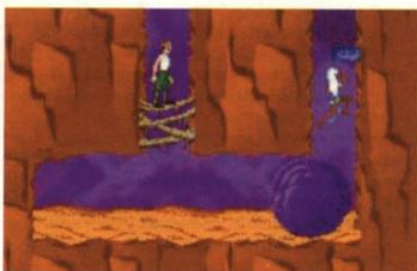
Of course this one isn't quite in the Miyamoto class. If anything, it resembles the ancient and annoying *Pitfall*, which has already been remade as a GBA title. You have to jump, swing and climb through levels based on the animated movie, which is to say, levels very few people are likely to recognise unless they happen to have seen the PlayStation version.

Top Tip

When dangling from bars, look for the little yellow arrows that indicate where you can drop safely to the solid ground below.



★ This game looks and plays like it's been through some sort of needlessly cruel blandomiser.



★ Even if you're a platform addict who dreams of scaffold most nights you can surely see the blatant dumposity!

LOST AT SEA

LOOK N' FEEL

The characters move well and the scrolling is reasonably smooth.

GAMEPLAY

Bog standard stuff that fails to grab the attention at all.

LIFESPAN

Little to make you want to come back and finish it.

DIFFICULTY

Not particularly difficult, thank goodness.

ADVANCE OPINION

Just another addition to the growing tide of barely distinguishable platform games that threatens to swamp the GBA

55



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

GRADIUS ADVANCE

The latest evolution of Konami's classic shoot-'em-up series blasts off

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Konami
- PHONE**
01895 853000
- WEB**
www.konami.com
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Battery
- LINK-UP**
No
- OUT**
TBA

The game opens with a smart intro sequence charting its long history all the way back to 1981's *Scramble*. With such a distinguished list of predecessors, you'd expect this new GBA-exclusive version to be something rather special.

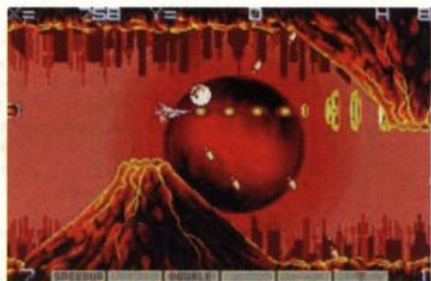
And it doesn't disappoint. Making nicely understated use of the GBA's sprite rotation and scaling hardware, it's a shoot-'em-up that oozes class. The concept is simple –

TopTip

Buy a speed-up as your first item, then save for an option. Watch the in-game demo movies to see which powerups to use on certain levels.



★ This is the type of game the GBA's wide screen was created for. Somebody's put a lot of thought into this.



★ Interesting, accomplished, atmospheric, but not too cluttered. The perfect balance.

fly along the scrolling levels, shooting waves of enemies to reveal powerup tokens that can be saved up to buy several different types of bonus item. One token is enough for an extra burst of speed, and five will pay for an extra 'option' craft that follows your every move and increases your firepower. Before starting, you can choose one of three slightly different powerup schemes to reflect your favoured style of play, depending on whether you prefer heavy firepower or something to help take out the may ground targets.

This genre is ideally suited to the GBA's wide screen, which offers a better view of incoming enemies than the old GB. The graphics are very small but still easy to see, and the scrolling is perfectly smooth – essential for something that calls for precision aiming and movement. It's just a really solid blast. The powerups are balanced, the levels are tough, but not unfairly so, and it feels like much more than a simple retro update. The best shoot-'em-up on the GBA. ●

SHOOT TO KILL

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Small graphics that remain helpfully smooth and uncluttered.

GAMEPLAY

Move, shoot, collect. You already know how to play this one.

LIFESPAN

Go for high scores or replay it with a different powerup set.

DIFFICULTY

Not so hard that you can't finish it with a little determination.

ADVANCE OPINION

A slick, accomplished blast from the past that puts most other handheld shooters to shame. A must-have.

90%

ADVANCE

37



★ *Pole Position* (left) isn't all that great by today's standards, but at least *Ms Pac-Man* is always playable

REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

NAMCO MUSEUM

Step back two decades with Namco's ultra-retro compilation

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Namco
- **PHONE**
01932 838 230
- **WEB**
www.namco.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
No
- **LINK-UP**
No
- **OUT**
TBA

"Namco could easily have included 20 or 30 games like this. That would be an essential cart."

Coin-ops had a certain magic and mystery about them before the days of huge £3-a-go simulators and the endless arrays of driving games and beat-'em-ups you find in the arcades at the moment. So releasing a compilation like this is a gamble, on Namco's part, that it will stir fond memories in people who remember the games the first time around.

None of the games featured here have even the tiniest amount of enhancement to bring them a little more up-to-date, so they really are straight out of a timewarp. The cart contains *Dig Dug*, *Pole Position*, *Ms Pac-Man*, *Galaga*, and *Galaxian*. The latter two are virtually identical, so that's four tiny games on a GBA cart, which must take up less than 100k of space in total. We've seen the same line-up on GBC, PlayStation and N64 in the past. Come on Namco, give us 20 game compilations!



★ *Dig Dug* is quite satisfying. You have to use a foot pump to inflate cartoon dinosaurs until they explode. Ouch!



★ *Galaga's* vertical monitor means there's a large 'dead' area of screen on the right.

Top Tip

Each game has a few tips screens, so check them out. Where's the retro trivia? The galleries? The added value stuff?

While each title undeniably deserves its place in the retro pantheon (with the possible exception of *Ms Pac-Man*, which is just *Pac-Man* with a different maze, they aren't worth the price of this cart. Namco could easily have included 20 or 30 games like this. That would be an essential cart. Instead, what we're likely to get is *Namco Museum Volume 2*, with a few different titles, then *Volume 3*, with some more, and so on. It smacks of tightness to keep charging full whack for a compilation of 20-year-old games that has already been re-released time and time again. The *Pac-Man Collection* is a great example of how to produce and package good value retro. This is just a bit pointless. ●

LOOK BACK IN ANGER

LOOK'N'FEEL

Exactly like the arcade originals, of course.

GAMEPLAY

Pole Position hasn't aged too well, but the others are fine.

LIFESPAN

No facility to save your scores, which is so very irritating

DIFFICULTY

There's a difficulty setting to fine-tune the games. Good one.

ADVANCE OPINION

These games are all good. We just wanted something new, not another port of this well-worn compilation. Bah.

50



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Konami
- PHONE**
01895 853000
- WEB**
www.konami.com
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Battery
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
November

"The real player names from 40 international teams have actually been recorded"

Having turned in some impressive performances on N64, PlayStation and PlayStation 2, *International Superstar Soccer* arrives on GBA with a lot to live up to, and perhaps an unreasonable level of expectation. Oh yes.

The series started life as a side-view SNES game, and this version marks a return to its roots. The player sprites are huge and reasonably well-animated, although their hefty size means you can't see much of the pitch. Consequently you have to rely on the radar, an awful lot, and that doesn't make for such smooth-flowing matches as the SNES version. There really is no excuse for this.

But it still plays a decent game of football. There are plenty of moves and tricks, coupled with an intelligent passing system (always an ISS strength) that automatically picks out the nearest unmarked player. There's even a commentary soundtrack, which is repetitive but unusual for a handheld title – many of the real player names from the 40

Top Tip

Use diagonal runs to bamboozle defenders – most of the time they'll keep backing off until you're in a position to whip a cross into the box

Does Konami's famous football title have what it takes to win the GBA World Cup?



★ An ambitious attempt at transferring the ISS magic to handheld, but a bit too clever-clever for its own good.

international teams have been recorded. Very impressive, but perhaps the memory spent on the nifty commentary would have been better used in providing a much needed training mode, but no doubt the novelty of a talking Game Boy Advance will help Konami sell plenty of copies.

As far as handheld football goes, this title is good (particularly in the two-player mode) but not really in the same division as Ubi Soft's *Total Soccer* series (see page 54). Until somebody sees fit to update and covert the Amiga classic *Sensible Soccer* to the Game Boy Advance, we'd advise you go for the excellent Steven Gerrard's *Total Soccer*. Unless, of course, the lure of that commentary is just too strong to resist. Hmmmm, players' naaaaaaames. ●

EUROPEAN QUALIFICATION

LOOK N' FEEL

Ginormous sprites that look great, but mean you can't see the pitch. Gumph.

GAMEPLAY

Faster and more furious than *Total Soccer*. Sometimes a little confusing.

LIFESPAN

International teams, tactic selections, a tournament and a two-player mode.

DIFFICULTY

You have to learn the game during actual matches, as there's no training mode.

ADVANCE OPINION

Flashy football that doesn't match its SNES granddaddy, but still plays a sweet version of the truly beautiful game.

80%



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT

ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING

How many extreme tricks can you pull off in front of the cameras?

GAMEINFO

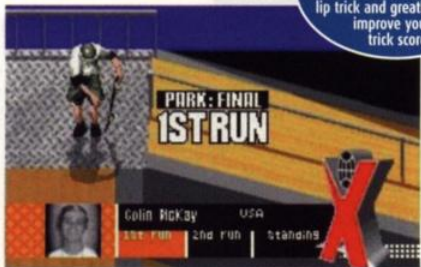
- **PUBLISHER**
Konami
- **PHONE**
01895 470503
- **WEB**
www.konami.co.uk
- **PRICE**
£30
- **SAVE**
Password
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November

If you're a skateboarding game that fancies giving *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater* a run for its money, then you'd better have some decent tricks up your sleeve, great visuals and top sounds, or you'll be out-olled by the Birdman. Ahem. Shame then, that *ESPN X Games*

Skateboarding just isn't good enough.

It all starts off so well too – the game is divided into two sections, the vert ramp and skate park options, and you'll have to pull off huge combos of the 42 different moves on offer to win the competitions in each section of the game. However, while the vert ramp looks cool and is loads of fun to play, the skate parks in the game are no fun to skate on at all, thanks to some rather strange use

Top Tip
After performing a stunt in the air, hold the B button to do a lip trick and greatly improve your trick score.



★ There are eight real skaters in the game to choose from, and each has his very own strengths and weaknesses.



★ Doing handplants on the vert section is really rather fun, and it's not that difficult either. Joy.

of different camera angles. The skate park mode starts off with an overhead view, but just as soon as you approach a ramp, ready to perform a trick, the game clumsily switches views to the side-on view that is used in the vert ramp competition. It's not a smooth transition between cameras either – the view clunks from overhead to side-on, leaving you confused and often eating dust, because the jerky camera change usually means that you miss-time your trick execution, leaving you flat on your face.

With loads of trick combos, eight real pro skaters to choose from and a killer vert ramp section, *ESPN X Games Skateboarding* does have quite a bit to offer, and you will have fun playing it. The trouble is, there aren't enough good bits in the game, and you'll be more angry than gnarly when you play this. *Tony Hawk's 2* is loads better, dude. ●

"There aren't enough good bits and you'll be more angry than gnarly"

RAMPAGE RATING

LOOK'N'FEEL

The game looks pretty enough, it just doesn't feel right at all though.

GAMEPLAY

The vert is excellent, but the rest of the game just isn't, and that isn't enough.

LIFESPAN

You'll get too annoyed to want to play this for any length of time.

DIFFICULTY

Pulling off stunts isn't that hard – it's just whether you'll want to bother.

ADVANCE OPINION

Half of this is good, and half of it is good old fashioned annoying. All of it isn't as good as *Tony Hawk's 2*. So there.

60



★ Fun as it all is, there isn't any gore to speak of, which makes the killing a little unsatisfying sometimes.

REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

ECKS vs SEVER

Slick first-person shooter based on a Hollywood blockbuster you haven't heard of yet...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Bam!
- PHONE
020 7428 7800
- WEB
www.bam4fun.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
November

"Many missions force you to use your head a little more than most shooters"

You may not have heard of it, but *Ecks vs Sever* is going to be a major movie blockbuster – when it eventually hits the silver screen. Bam! snapped up the videogame rights and came up with a fantastic first-person shooter that faithfully follows the plot. But while the game's finished, filming is yet to begin... Scheduling problems aside, there is another battle *Ecks vs Sever* has to contend with – it's going head-to-head with *Doom* in the race to be the GBA's premier first-person shooter. And for our money, it comes second. But while it's not quite up to the standard of *Id*'s classic in the multi-player stakes, it does have plenty going for it.

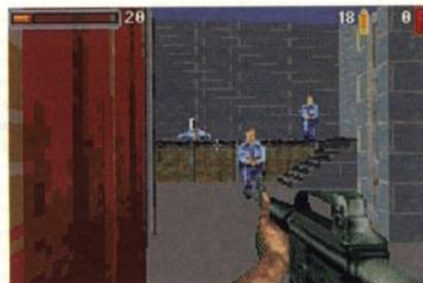
Firstly, it's one smooth-running shooter. Because it lacks the floor and ceiling textures of *Doom*, there's more scope for extra features, including the ability to crouch, use a sniper rifle, throw grenades or even use heat-sensitive goggles.

These mightn't sound like much of an addition, but it does allow you to approach levels in a stealthier manner than wading in and emptying your pistol clip into anything than moves. In fact, many missions force you to use your head a little more than most shooters, and so this objective-based single-player approach is quite refreshing.

Ecks vs Sever has some rock-solid missions and a great backstory. The game is broken up into two parts – one set of levels where you play as ex-cop Ecks and another where you play as assassin, Sever, resulting in some very involving and atmospheric levels. This is definitely worth checking out if you're tired of what *Doom* has to offer. ●

Top Tip

If you're having trouble taking out large groups of FBI agents, try using crouch to dodge bullets and for extra stealth.



★ A variety of mission objectives to complete on both sides of the law stops the action from feeling too samey.



★ Now this we do like. Neat touches like these thermal goggles never cease to surprise us. Very tasty.

ECKS APPEAL

LOOK N' FEEL

Not the prettiest thing in the world, but it's nice and fast with tight controls.

GAMEPLAY

Complete objectives while gunning down hordes of enemy agents.

LIFESPAN

With two single-player characters and four-way multi-play, this'll last you.

DIFFICULTY

Unbelievably tough in places – you'll certainly have your work cut out.

ADVANCE OPINION

As a single player FPS, this really is great stuff. The multi-player is a little lacking though, and isn't as polished as *Doom*.

88%



REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY

DENKI BLOCKS!

Exclamation marks seem to be a prerequisite at the moment. They're everywhere!!!!

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Rage
- PHONE
0151 237 2200
- WEB
www.rage.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
On the GBA
- UNK-UP
Yes
- OUT
October

"On paper it sounds weird and the first impression it gives is of childish simplicity"

To try *Denki Blocks!* before you buy, just head over to the Rage website, because the clever lads have created a playable Shockwave demo to sample. That ought to demonstrate how neat, innovative ideas surround this cheeky sliding block puzzle; and it's all wrapped up so gorgeously, you can't help but warm to it. Puzzle Island is home to bright colours and rounded cartoon characters. They'll challenge you to examine a few squares sitting on a grid, with obstructions dotted about between them. Pressing the keypad shifts all of the squares at the same time, unless obstacles prevent it, but if any of the shapes touch they bond together. The aim is to get all the shapes of the same colour to meld, often in a particular order or pattern, using the walls help position your pieces.

On paper it sounds weird, and the first impression it gives is of childish simplicity. It's charming and amusing and the



★ Battle mode is only available against friends, although there are AI foes for other types of tournament.



★ A range of colourful characters introduces each board from the ever-so-twee Puzzle Island. Little psychos!

learning curve is spot on. In basic single-player Tournament mode the island boasts eight levels each guarded by a character that commands 25 puzzles. They quickly grow brutally brain-taxing. There are also multiplayer modes, a training mode and other bonus levels where you can win points by forming set shapes.

While it pleases on an intellectual level, *Denki Blocks!* is repetitive and fails to draw you in time and again the way that *ChuChu Rocket!* (the other puzzler with an exclamation) manages. It's an accomplished and well-constructed concept that falls a smidgeon short of 'must have' status. ●

Top Tip!

Remember to keep an eye out for the rare bonus shapes - if you can complete the level and leave the blocks in this special position, you'll get more points.

"JA DANKE"

LOOK N' FEEL

Like your kid brother's LEGO Duplo set.

GAMEPLAY

Push and shove - a good eye for detail is more important than speed.

LIFESPAN

Lots to do, and you'll be scratching your head most of the time.

DIFFICULTY

Deceptively simple - some of those later levels are fiendish.

ADVANCE OPINION

A teasingly robust puzzle-'em-up which boasts that 'easy to learn, hard to master' quality.

85



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

ROBOT WARS

ADVANCED DESTRUCTION

Smashing, crashing and bashing with the DIY mayhem machines!

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
BBC
- PHONE
0208 222 9700
- WEB
www.bbc.co.uk
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
November

For those of you who are cack-handed with a soldering iron, liable to lose fingers in a bandsaw, or simply don't have access to a ready supply of old electric wheelchair parts, you won't get the chance to appear on the BBC's Robot Wars show. But you can get a pretty good impression of what it must be like to battle those mobile piles of scrap metal, thanks to this gem. Nip into the virtual workshop and choose a chassis, power source, armour, and most importantly, a weapon capable of punching holes in your enemy's lovingly created droid. Then take your machine out into the battle arena and see how well your effort performs against a series of opponents and those massive house robots.

The controls are confusing to begin with, but you'll get the hang of them after fighting a few losing battles. The A and B buttons make the robot rotate, the D-pad makes it roll forwards and backwards, and the shoulder buttons activate the weapons. If you get flipped upside-down, then Select puts you the right way up. It's very faithful to the TV show, and if you're a big fan, you'll get a lot of mileage out of this one.

The screen zooms in and out to follow the action, resulting in a convincing 3D look which is somewhat spoiled by a lack of animation frames when the robots get flipped. It would have been nice to see debris flying all over the arena too, but instead the robots just seem to catch fire after a while. A good companion to the real thing though. ●

Top Tip

Don't pick the cylindrical chassis - it's crap, and you won't be able to tell which way your robot is facing. The wedge is much better.



★ It's always best to go for those tricky-to-avoid wedge-shaped robots, but have a turney-over device built in.



★ And as with every war, the opponents get together and have a lovely big kiss afterwards.

"Take your machine out into the battle arena and see how well it performs"

ROBOTEERS READY

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Decent graphics and a rather confusing control system.

GAMEPLAY

Pushing robots into spinning saw blades is always good fun.

LIFESPAN

Create-a-robot mode, and multiplayer battles too.

DIFFICULTY

The computer robots gang up on you, but it's not too hard.

ADVANCE OPINION

If you've got the Robot Wars videos, magazines and so on, you'll have a good time with this unusual battle game

80%



REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY

PLANET MONSTERS

Gotta kill 'em all! With traps, bombs and... jelly?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Titus
- PHONE**
01926 335400
- WEB**
www.titusgames.com
- PRICE**
£24.99
- SAVE**
Password
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
December

"A maze-based squish-'em-up that has loads in common with Bomberman"



★ The rough map in the lower right hand corner reveals where your three opponents are in relation to you.



★ You can't fall off the end into the sea, but you can push enemies over by knocking them with blocks.

Get your link-up cable ready, because this bonkers top-down puzzler is a repetitive affair if you insist on playing by yourself. Although on the surface it looks like a cutesy *Pokémon* clone, it's actually a maze-based squish-'em-up that has tons in common with *Bomberman*.

There are 40 irregularly shaped levels spread across eight worlds, each map being constructed from small blocks. You kill opponents by pushing a block out of its alignment onto a passing player: thump, splat. There are four players in the mix at any time – controlled by computer if you're playing alone – and each map has a small selection of pick-ups to keep the action spicy. Springs enable you to bounce over blocks, for instance, while jelly guns can stick your opponents to the spot giving you a clear shot at them. Yes, jelly guns.

Each of the themed mazes is also populated by ugly critters which will kill you if they touch you. This is irritating at first. You'll often lose because you've run into a giant penguin, not because your opponents outwitted you. However, knocking them about soon becomes part of the charm.

In the single-player game you have to face a boss before a planet can be considered complete, and these levels are particularly frantic and fun – anything that isn't nailed down becomes a weapon for you to kick at the beast. Although the maps get huge and are all thoughtfully constructed, so that each scenario is more punishing than the one before, only multiplayer sessions really keep you coming back for more. ●

Top Tip!

When fighting a boss, knock blocks at him to slowly wear down his armour, but stay as far away as possible because he can spawn smaller monsters to come after you!

DIET BOMBERMAN

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Too rainbow cute for its own good. The levels are so sugary, your teeth hurt.

GAMEPLAY

No frills, but fun in short bursts. A little more innovation would have been nice.

LIFESPAN

Loads of levels, and especially good with mates (or indeed enemies).

DIFFICULTY

Good sense of balanced progression in single-player mode.

ADVANCE OPINION

It's a competent, fast puzzler, but as an alternative to *Bomberman*, *Planet Monsters* fails to engage in the same way.

78



★ Tang + Tang = Tang Tang. Simple maths, really. But what will the sequel be called?

REVIEWER: JONTI DAVIES

TANG TANG

It's weird and it's tangy, but it'll leave a nasty taste in your mouth...

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Take Two
- **PHONE**
020 7938 4488
- **WEB**
www.capcom.com
- **PRICE**
£34.99
- **SAVE**
Battery (hi-scores only)
- **LINK-UP**
No
- **OUT**
November

Tang Tang is the latest in a long and distinguished line of single-screen platform puzzlers that includes such absolute classics as *Rainbow Islands*, *Parasol Stars* and, of course, *Bubble Bobble*. But does *Tang Tang* live up to its pedigree? Or is it merely a pale imitation? Hmmmm.

Yep. Yes it is. But that's not to say that *Tang Tang* is poor – it's just that it's flawed and quite average. After choosing a soldier from a team of four (each of which resemble some hackneyed cross between Budgie the Helicopter, Bomberman and Nintendo's Ice Climbers), you must use your pick and blocks to collect... stuff. In your way are many obstacles and baddies, and success always comes at a price – usually of a life or two per stage. It's tricky, for sure.

Then there's *Tang Tang*'s distinctive look. It's just plain weird – it's not jumbo crayon stuff, it's not even really

Japanese wackiness, but it's just an uncomfortable mixture of many cartoon styles. Quite nice, but very strange. And the same can be said of the gameplay, which feeds off *Worms* as much as it does *Bubble Bobble*. See, you can build blocks and climb up them, and you can also dislodge blocks and sneak through the gaps left – and this can get a bit confusing. Odd.

There are some glaring flaws, though, that really grind down what could have been a nice and quirky title. For one, there's just the single mode of play, a collection of 120 levels, which must be played through from level 1-1 each and every time the game is turned on. Which is incredibly frustrating. What's more, there's no multiplayer option. If you don't get tired of this after a day of persistence, then you can give yourself a pat on the back. ●

Top Tip

Don't buy this game and if you've been given it as a gift don't open it, exchange it for anything else.

"There are gaming flaws that grind down what could have been a nice, quirky title"



★ All too frustrating and uninspired to excite. Competent, but ultimately soulless.



★ None of that *Bubble Bobble* style-e stage-naming can hide *Tang Tang*'s rotten gameplay.

TANGO FOR CASH?

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Tang Tang has a bizarre, but cold, dry feel to it. It's a bit disturbing, to be honest.

GAMEPLAY

Fairly decent, if a little odd and dated.

LIFESPAN

120 levels, when forced to play through from the first level onwards.

DIFFICULTY

More frustrating and limited than difficult. Erkl

ADVANCE OPINION

Tang Tang is a Frankenstein of a game, where elements of bygone classics have come together and gone horribly wrong.

45/100

ADVANCE

45



★ The relentless blasting gets more and more frantic the further you get. You've just got to love it.

REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

Id's superb shooter has been shrink wrapped for a new generation, and it'll totally blow you away...

We all knew it was coming but we never realised – or believed – that it could possibly be this good. If someone told us eight years ago that we'd be playing *Doom* on a palm-sized gaming machine through a cart smaller than a custard cream, we'd have punched their sorry faces through the

monitors of our 486 PCs... well, maybe. Either way, it's a reality now, and you're going to love every single minute of it.

We can't imagine that any of you have never heard of *Doom* but if you are unfamiliar with the game, here's the skinny. You're a bad-ass marine in a texture-mapped 3D environment. You've got a whopping great pile of mega-death weaponry at

your disposal, which you use to kill, kill, kill, kill. Your aim is simply to find each level's exit to escape to a new level, where you repeat the above process, only with more nasties to blow away.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Activision
- **PHONE**
01753 756 100
- **WEB**
www.activision.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November

DOOM



★ You don't want to rely on your pistol for too long with these angry fellas around. Run away and find a chaingun!

Pretty straightforward, really, and it's for this reason that *Doom* is so successful. Forget mission objectives, forget stealth. Just grab your shotgun and pump shells into anything that stands between you and the exit to the level. On your way you can pick up ammo, armour, health, extra weapons and find secret rooms (that normally contain stashes of such goodies) to help you along the way.

So the question is, how does it compare to the infamous PC version? Exceptionally well. True, there is a fair step down in resolution and clarity and this is to be expected on the small screen. In play, however, this isn't particularly noticeable. In fact, it all looks exceptionally accomplished. In single-player everything moves at an alarming rate, which goes a long way to helping it retain that frantic *Doom* feel.

As far as level layout is concerned, everything is spot on. All the secrets are in the same place, the enemy and pick-up placement is pretty much identical to its older brother and (spookily enough) even the sound effects faithfully recreate those from the PC version. The whine of the rising doors, the grunts of the demons and the charge of the BFG are so much like the original, it will bring all your memories of this awesome shooter flooding back.

So what else is there to say? This is *Doom*, only portable, and for that reason alone you should be queueing outside your local games emporium right now to get a piece of it, but more to the point, you should be getting your GBA-owning mates to queue up with you, because by linking up four GBAs, you'll be party to one hell of a multi-player game.

While single-player is good, terrifying fun, the multi-player kill-or-be-killed deathmatch is pure brilliance. Granted, it may run a trifle slower than in the single-player game, but then who cares, when you can have full-on shotgun frenzies on the back of the bus?

If you haven't got the message yet already, we thoroughly recommend you hunt this classic down immediately. You'll by no means regret it. Fantastic stuff, make no mistake. ●



★ The imps' pig-like grunts sound just like the original, and are guaranteed to send a shiver down your spine. They love nothing better than chewing on your chainsaw.

As good as it gets

Just so that you can get an idea of the how the original and the GBA version compare, here's a couple of screenshots. The GBA version is a little lacking in definition, but on the small screen this really makes little difference. Even so, *Doom* on GBA can still boast fully texture-mapped environments –

even on the floor and ceiling – making it far more atmospheric than its rivals. The draw distance is also highly commendable – putting games like *Backtrack* to shame. But it's gameplay that really counts, and the GBA version is as close to the original as we could possibly have hoped for. Brilliant.



★ The monsters have been redrawn to fit the display, but they're just as terrifying!



★ The PC's graphics are more a little detailed, due to its bigger screen.

Top Tip

There are tons of various controller configurations, but we suggest using the shoulder buttons to circle strafe around your target. This is an essential tactic for survival.



★ The shotgun was always the most satisfying weapon – more so when you're in a crowded room.

“While single player is good, terrifying fun, the multiplayer kill-or-be-killed death match is pure brilliance”

DOOMED?

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Almost perfect. A little lower res maybe, but it looks and sounds like the original.

GAMEPLAY

Furious and atmospheric death-fest that'll have you soiling yourself at every turn.

LIFESPAN

Whether you've got four mates or not you'll be hard pushed to put this down.

DIFFICULTY

On the hardest settings you'll need all the help you can get. Very tough.

ADVANCE OPINION

Another absolute must-have for Nintendo's handheld. If you've got *Mario Kart* then this should be your next buy.

93/100



REVIEWER: OLIVER HURLEY

WWF ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA

The first WWF game for GBA, but is it case of style over substance?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
THQ
- PHONE**
01483 767 656
- WEB**
www.thq-wwfgames.com
- PRICE**
£34.99
- SAVE**
Password
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
November

"You're struck by not only the range of characters on offer, but also the wealth of modes and options"



★ The selection of matches ranges from simple one-on-one affairs to three-ways and cage bouts.



★ Notice the detail in the crowd – they even have different signs. Very snazzy indeed.

WWF Road to WrestleMania, in many ways, puts the numerous prior WWF Game Boy offerings to shame. Almost as soon as you switch it on you're struck by not only the range of characters on offer (24 in all, covering everyone from The Rock to Billy Gunn) but also the wealth of modes and options. Yes!

Previous Game Boy wrestling outings could only have dreamt of being able to house the plethora of Cage matches, Triple Threat encounters and Iron Man brawls of Road to WrestleMania. If that's not enough, there's a choice of six different arenas (including SmackDown! and, naturally, WrestleMania) and a more-than-generous eight different modes of play, including a cool link-up option allows up to four players to scrap it out at once.

There is, of course, a *but*, and an all-too-significant one at that. The problem is, it just doesn't play that well at all. The interface is incredibly frustrating and clumsy enough that you'll spend more time grappling with the controls than you will with your opponent. So, whatever you do, don't let it fool you by its flirtatious good looks, or tease you with its host of modes.

Unless you're specifically after a WWF license being slapped on your wrestling games, you are in fact better off with the excellent *Fire Pro Wrestling* which more than makes up for its failure to include the likes of 'Stone Cold' Steve Austin with the simple fact that it plays like a dream. It's just a shame the same could not be said of *Road to WrestleMania*. ●

Top Tip!

If your energy is low and you're in need of a breather, roll outside the ring. Just make sure you make it back in again before the 10 count.

WRESTLE WITH THIS...

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Great presentation with some lovely animations and impressive entrances.

GAMEPLAY

This is what really lets it down with its clumsy and awkward controls.

LIFESPAN

There are loads of modes and a four-player link-up, so plenty to keep you occupied.

DIFFICULTY

Once you get your head round the control system, it's not actually too tricky.

ADVANCE OPINION

Stylistically it's really impressive, and there's loads squeezed in here, but it just plays like damp squib.

64%



REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

SUPER BUST-A-MOVE

Taito's hyper-addictive cutesy puzzler makes its way to GBA...

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Ubi Soft
- **PHONE**
01932 838 230
- **WEB**
www.ubisoft.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Password
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November



★ Connect balls of the same colour together and they'll disappear. It's good, simple, puzzlin' fun.



★ Try setting off chain reactions, where clearing a set of blocks causes others to connect and also disappear.

"Get a mate to join you and you're looking at one of the most addictive games known to man"

As any self-respecting gamer will testify, the *Bust-a-Move* series has been taking gamers prisoner for quite some time on a number of platforms. And as is the case with many a good puzzler, it's down to a frighteningly simple premise blended with outrageous cuteness.

The game works by shooting various coloured balls from a central cannon at the foot of the screen. A mass of multi-coloured balls hangs from the ceiling above. By aiming your cannon at same-coloured balls (a chain of three and they disappear) you can slowly clear them away. Fail, and the playing area begins to get clogged up. And when they eventually reach your cannon, it's game over.

Thankfully, this proven puzzler doesn't lose too much in the translation to the small screen. It's initially quite tricky to aim effectively due to the tiny area that you have to work with, but after a while you soon get the hang of things.

thanks to the ability to fine tune your aim via the shoulder buttons.

As far as the single-player game goes, the appeal is somewhat limited, but get a mate to join you and you're looking at one of the most addictive multi-player games known to man. *Bust-A-Move*, therefore, is worth a place in any gamer's collection. ●

Top Tip

Try to aim your balls as far towards the top as possible. By linking coloured chains far up the screen, you'll create some massive combos.



WHAM BAM THANK YOU MA'AM

LOOK N' FEEL

Basic, brightly coloured balls. But with a game this simple, you don't need more...

GAMEPLAY

One of the most addictive games in the world. It grabs you and doesn't let you go.

LIFESPAN

Single-player will last a while, but multi-player will last as long as you have friends.

DIFFICULTY

Later puzzles are pretty tricky, but there's nothing here you can't beat with practice.

ADVANCE OPINION

BAM is one of the better puzzlers available for GBA. If you've not tried it before, we strongly suggest you try it now.

86%



REVIEWER: JONATHAN DAVIES

TETRIS WORLDS

Alexey Pazhitnov would surely turn in his grave. (If he was dead.)

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
THQ
- PHONE**
01483 767656
- WEB**
www.thq.co.uk
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
No
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
November

"You'd be better off picking up a cheap copy of Tetris DX for Game Boy Color"

Tinkering with a winning formula is a perilous process. To wit Cherry Coke, or when Niles and Daphne got together. Or the introduction of Scraggy Doo. THQ must know this. They must have sampled a Snickers Cruncher.

So how come we've now got *Sticky Tetris*, where similarly coloured blocks stick together? Or *Hot-Line Tetris*, where lines cleared at certain levels on the screen score more points? Or *Square Tetris*, where you've got to make squares? Or *Cascade Tetris*, where you've got to create Puyo-Puyo-style chain reactions? Or, indeed, *Fusion Tetris*, with added atom blocks?

All these variations are included in *Tetris Worlds*. Are any of them improvements on the 16-year-old Russian original? No they're not. (But luckily that's in here too.) Are they gradually introduced as unlockable rewards for doing well in the main game? No they're not. Is there a story mode? No.

There's also the problem that *Tetris* is played in a vertical column-shaped area, whereas the Game Boy Advance plumps for a widescreen layout. So they've filled most of the screen with annoying animations instead of, for example, cunningly giving you the option of turning your GBA through 90 degrees. Or, for that matter, including battery back-up to record your high scores and options settings.

So basically, you'd be better off picking up a cheap copy of *Tetris DX* for the Game Boy Color, which is just as much fun and will work fine in your GBA. ●

Top Tip

Build up four layers, leaving a one-block-wide gap down one side. Then drop a long thin bit into the gap for maximum points.

(Copyright 2001 Tips from Beyond the Grave Inc.)



★ Deer deer. What on Earth happened to the Cossack dancers and the Kremlin?



★ The "ghost square" feature, which shows you where the next bit will land, is crap.

TETRIS ON THE BLOCK

LOOK N' FEEL

The background animations and things don't add much.

GAMEPLAY

Same classic formula at heart with some pointless new bits.

LIFESPAN

A story mode or unlockable secrets would have been a nice addition.

DIFFICULTY

Starts off easy and gets harder. Basically.

ADVANCE OPINION

It's *Tetris*, but with the Russian flavour replaced by a weird 'worlds' thing and some minor gameplay tinkering. But why?

56



REVIEWER: IAN HARRIS

RUGRATS: CASTLE CAPERS

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
THQ
- PHONE
01483 767 656
- WEB
www.thq.co.uk
- PRICE
£34.99
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
November

"It's hard to tell the difference between castles and giant biscuits"

ANGELICCAAAA!

LOOK N' FEEL

Pretty enough but clunky in places and feels just a little unfinished somehow.

GAMEPLAY

Things get going when the game speeds up, but are spoiled by the dodgy camera.

LIFESPAN

The six levels are huge, but they shouldn't take long to clock.

DIFFICULTY

More chore-some than difficult, we're afraid. No, really.

Rugrats: Castle Capers features all the babies in a colourful adventure across six large levels. Whilst Grandpop nipped off for a kip, Angelica nicked everyone's toys, forcing the babies to band together and retrieve their belongings. But although *Rugrats* is a platform game, you don't seem able to kill anything. Instead you troop the babies around dodging epileptic penguins and brain damaged snowmen. These baddies don't pose any serious problems – just leap out of their way and they continue the same march. Oh dear.

When you discover another Rugrat you can perform other tricks, like leaping on each other's heads to do super high jumps. At some points in the game there can be up to six of them on screen at once. The graphics are cute and chunky, and the levels scroll fast enough to make speeding down slopes and racing up ramps a challenge.

The excitement of plugging in the cartridge soon fades, though for all the wrong reasons. The camera is so loosely focused that jumping sends it whizzing upwards too quickly, and you often have to proceed slowly because the camera hasn't caught up. Another problem is actually seeing what's going on. It's hard telling the difference between foreground objects and clouds, castles and giant biscuits in the background. Which is always a problem. ●

Top Tip

Don't go too fast. When you reach a tricky bit, wait until the camera has caught up with you before treading suspect ground.

Accomplished platformer or crushing cute kiddy caper cash-in?



★ The indoor levels are easier, since you have more of an idea where to go. Which is nice.



★ Rugrats looks pretty, but balancing on each of these leaves can be really hit and miss. Oh dear.

ADVANCE OPINION

If you want a good blast look elsewhere. The camera problems and background graphics make this a chore to play.

60%

ADVANCE

51



REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY

THE POWERPUFF GIRLS MOJO JOJO A-GO-GO

Sugar, spice, Chemical X, a criminal monkey genius... You've seen it on TV, right?

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Bam!
- **PHONE**
020 7428 7800
- **WEB**
www.bam4fun.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November

"Despite the cartoony feel, the Powerpuff Girls' latest is an uninspired blaster"



★ Yikes! It's mad monkey Mojo Jojo himself! In a flying garden-tool equipped chair, of all things.



★ Being able to pluck objects from the environment makes the Girls' first GBA outing different from regular shooters.

Unlikely superheroes, those ponytailed Powerpuff Girls. But the Cartoon Network's comedy animation about Blossom, Bubbles and Buttercup has an ironic edge to it that means even grown-up viewers get hooked to their infantile adventures in Townsville. The little ladies already feature in three Game Boy Color adventures, and now they've super-leaped onto the Advance for more arch-villain bashing. Sadly developer Bam! has taken the Powerpuff characters and placed them in a rather insipid horizontal-scrolling shoot-'em-up. Sure, it features seven huge levels and supports link-up games where three of you can play a girl each. But this battle against the evil Mojo Jojo and his mobots handles like a clone of *R-Type*, as you dodge from left to right, *Defender*-style, shooting eye-rays at hordes of metal monsters. Our heroines' visual powers can be upgraded with pick-ups, and they can also grab certain bits of scenery to lob at oncomers, which is a neat touch. It's rewarding to yank up a bit of Mojo Jojo's own machinery and hurl it back at a squad of his goons.

It's a testing experience, because there's only one difficulty setting and it's a rough ride. But despite the cartoony feel, the Powerpuff Girls' latest is an uninspired blasting game that quickly turns from a pastime into a chore. ●

Top Tip

It's often easier to dodge a wave of foes instead of tackling them - but if that means keeping low, watch out for cars or ground-hugging villains that will collide with you.

PUFF DADDY

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Plenty of neat cartoony touches that will endear it to fans of the TV show.

GAMEPLAY

It's like playing an ancient *Defender* or *R-Type*: old-school, and repetitive.

LIFESPAN

Although shoot-'em-up fans will enjoy the challenge, most will get bored quickly.

DIFFICULTY

Tough from the outset but you can soon learn your enemies' attack paths.

ADVANCE OPINION

A brave attempt to do something a little different with a license. So it's a shame, then, that this title fails to inspire.

62%



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT

ROCKET POWER THE DREAM SCHEME

It's got the power, but is Rocket Power a dream to play or a bit of a mare?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
THQ
- PHONE
020 7938 4488
- WEB
www.thq.co.uk
- PRICE
£30
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
November

"Wander through 16 levels on a skateboard, roller blades, pogo stick or on foot"

Everyone knows that chomping cheese before you go to bed gives you crazy nightmares, and, as Otto, one of the heroes of *Rocket Power*, finds out to his cost, filling your face with a load of greasy tucker has a similar effect. While he is sleeping, young Otto has a nightmare that the nasty Dr. Stimpleton captures his sister Reggie, and her mates Sam and Twister too. That wouldn't be so bad if he could wake himself up, but he can't, and so he has to wander through the 16 levels on a skateboard, roller blades, pogo stick or on foot, to find his pals and also stop the Dr from using his Stimpleton device, a machine that will turn the beautiful town of Ocean Shores into an ugly Seaside Polka Resort. Nasty.

The game is a bit of a nightmare too, because there are too many little

Top Tip

When jumping onto ledges, try changing from skates to feet while you're in mid air. This should improve your chances of landing without falling off. But don't bet on it.



★ Every leap that you make has to be to exactly the right place, or you'll fall off.

niggles and frustrations to make it fun. For starters, the skateboard and roller blades are over sensitive – you'll be jumping carefully from platform to platform, only to make one tiny slip and fall off and have to start all over again. The collision detection isn't much better either, and there are loads of times when hitting the enemy in just the wrong place will, somewhat unjustly, rob you of a life.

It's not all bad news though, because sometimes speeding through the ramp-packed levels is a laugh, but the laughter soon fades when there's some awkward jumps to be made. With cool characters from the cartoon, and an extreme sports twist, *Rocket Power* should have been good, but instead it just turns out to be more annoying than it is fun. If it's decent platforming you're after, check *Spyro*, and if you're gagging for some skating action, then get gnarly with *Tony Hawk's*, but don't bother with this frustration-fest. ●



★ As you go through the levels, there are more characters to unlock and play as.

GOT THE POWER?

LOOK 'N' FEEL

All the characters look just like they do in the cartoon.

GAMEPLAY

Fun for a while, but can get very annoying very quickly.

LIFESPAN

16 whopping levels will have you playing for many a week to come.

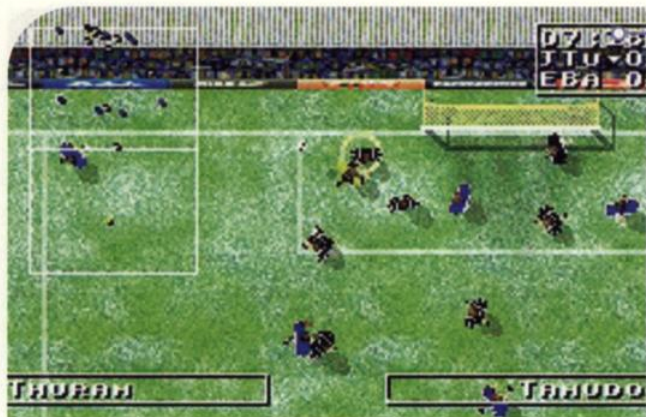
DIFFICULTY

Pretty tough at times, but only because every move you make has to be spot on.

ADVANCE OPINION

It's a good idea, and there is some fun to be had, but ultimately, it'll have you annoyed than entertained.

59%



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT

STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER 2002

It doesn't look brilliant, but can Total Soccer 2002 kick it? Yes it can!

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Ubisoft
- PHONE**
01932 838 230
- WEB**
www.ubisoft.co.uk
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Battery
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
Now

"Not an accurate simulation, but wonderfully playable and as addictive as hell"

It's every football loving boy's dream to be one of the brightest young prospects in English football. But if you're one of the millions that will never be that good, and will only ever grace your local park with your limited skills, then join the club, and take some comfort in the fact that you can now play like a footballing god, and you can do it on the move too.

The first thing that you notice when you start playing *Total Soccer 2002* is that it isn't that much like real football. This isn't an accurate simulation, but it is wonderfully playable, and it's as addictive as hell. The main difference between this game and most other footy efforts that you'll play is the amount of after touch that you can put on the ball. With a little bit of manipulation of the D-pad, you'll be lifting the ball all over the pitch, and curling your shots like you were David



★ Choose your club team from Spain, England, Germany, France, Holland and Italy, as well as national teams.

Player	P	SPD	SHL	Tactics
1. T. Verbeke	G			
2. B. B. B.	D			
3. Henchoz	D			
4. Hyypia	D			
5. Ziege	D			
6. Gerrard	M			
7. Berber	M			
8. Murphy	M			
9. Arne Risse	M			
10. Hezkey	M			
11. Owen	F			
Arphexod	G			
Bricon	D			
Fowler	M			
Litmanen	M			
Barnaby	M			

★ Each player is present and has his own set of abilities - stats entertainment!

Top Tip
Master the after touch, and you'll be Premier League in no time. Practice those curling skills!

Beckham with banana boots on. At first, all this ball-bending is hard to get to grips with, but with a bit of practice, you'll soon be scoring amazing goals and executing pinpoint set pieces from all over the pitch, and what fun it is too.

With more than 170 real teams and players, skill levels to provide every standard of player with a decent challenge, league and cup competitions, and wind and pitch conditions that will affect the flight of the ball, *Total Soccer 2002* has got enough to keep football fans everywhere amused for ages. It's fast, frantic and a bit odd at first, but you'll soon get used to the lightning pace and overhead perspective, and once you do, you won't want to put it down. Brilliant. ●

GERRARD JUDGEMENT

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Not the best-looking player on the park, but it's clear and fast.

GAMEPLAY

Not realistic, but so playable it hurts. You will be utterly addicted.

LIFESPAN

Stacks of competitions and difficulty levels - you'll be playing for seasons.

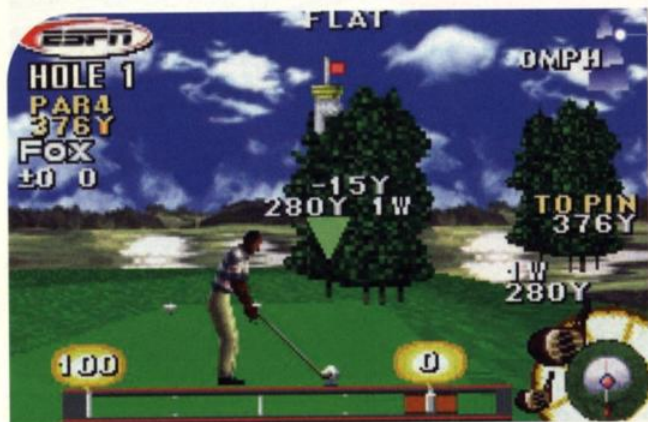
DIFFICULTY

A bit tough at first, but you'll soon master curling that ball. Well balanced.

ADVANCE OPINION

It's not massively pretty, but this is the most playable football game yet to hit the GBA. Easily top of the league.

88 %



★ A Micro Machines view of the action that's about as useful as a papier-mâché club. Cheers then!

REVIEWER: JONTI DAVIES

ESPN FINAL ROUND GOLF 2002

Like clubbing? Good, then you might like this...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Konami
- PHONE
01895 853000
- WEB
www.konami.com
- PRICE
£34.99
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
Now

"Visually ESPN is decent enough, but the golf balls do look like ostrich eggs at times"



★ Recognise any of these ugly mugs? Didn't think so.

Golf. That sport of fiftysomethings in Pringle jumpers walking around parks at snails' pace. Yeah, it's great. And digital interpretations of the game have been spiffing too. But what about this, the first GBA club-'em-up?

Truth is, this game is tiresome. It strives to be realistic, it even looks quite lifelike, but as a result it's just not as fun as, say, *Mario Golf* on the Game Boy Color or *Neo Turf Masters* on the Neo Geo Pocket Colour. The gameplay system is typical of most golf games, where a series of three button presses input power, accuracy and spin. It works well enough, but *ESPN Final Round Golf* is really lacking in other areas...

As far as style goes, ESPN has got none. Where *Mario Golf* had its own Mushroom Kingdom look, ESPN is merely a dryly-realistic take on the sport. But the realism doesn't quite extend to the golfers themselves – they look a bit like their



★ Bet you can't hit a ball so hard that it explodes. Can ya?

real-life counterparts, but they've got silly names like "Pete" and "Dave". There's some dodgy camera action, too, with a few different angles that are flicked between at odd moments. But why?

Visually, ESPN is decent enough. The golf balls do look like ostrich eggs at times, but generally everything is crisp and clean, and quite nicely detailed. It sounds okay, too, giving a good thwack for each hit of the ball.

On the whole, there isn't too much wrong with this ESPN-licensed golf game. It's just wholly unspectacular and rather dreary in places. It's no *Mario Golf*, but until something better comes along this is the best clubbing action available for the Game Boy Advance. ●

Top Tip
When the power meter starts to fall back and you need to get the accuracy right, err on the side of pressing too early. A hook will travel more truly than a slice, for some reason.

PAR FOR THE COURSE?

LOOK 'N' FEEL

So-so. Nice and clear, but pretty ordinary every day, ho-hum, run of the mill...

GAMEPLAY

Same-old, same-old. Not that that's a terrible thing.

LIFESPAN

If you get into it, then the multiplayer will keep you happy for a good while.

DIFFICULTY

Quite easy, really. It's just a matter of timing. Er, like golf.

ADVANCE OPINION

A decent golf sim, but too dry to be in the same league as the classic golf games of years gone by.

65%

ADVANCE

55



★ The battle mode is great fun and is sure to prompt you to get a link-up cable if you haven't already.

REVIEWER: JONATHAN DAVIES

One of the best games ever has been placed under Nintendo's shrink-o-ray.

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Nintendo
- PHONE
01932 895390
- WEB
www.gameboyadvance.co.uk
- PRICE
£34.95
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
Now

Mario Kart is as much a part of Nintendo mythology as blue dungarees, gorillas and those green pipes with secret passages in. The SNES original revolutionised racing games with its Mode 7 circuits, pin-sharp handling and multi-player larks, and the N64 follow-up added 3D scenery and Wario. So when a GBA version was announced, pocket gamers across the realm gibbered in anticipation. And they won't be disappointed. *Mario Kart Super Circuit* is fantastic. It's the finest portable racing game ever created, and a contender for the best GBA game to date. Looks-wise it's somewhere between the two



★ The Ghost Valley courses are probably the scariest, and not just 'cos of the ghosts. It's all too easy to slither off the edge.

older games. The flat, feature-free circuits are very SNES, but parallax scrolling backdrops and well animated karters give it an almost N64 look if you squint a bit.

The size of the cart belies the amount they've managed to squeeze into it. The 20 "standard" tracks include familiar scenarios like Bowser's Castle, Ghost Valley and Koopa Beach, but there are also all-new scenarios like Cheese Land, with its squeaky blue mice, and the gift-wrapped Sky Garden. And as if that wasn't enough, the 20 tracks from the SNES version have been included as unlockable bonuses, albeit in stripped-down, not-actually-that-much-fun form. All the N64 version's power-ups are present and correct too.

The various playing modes from the full-sized versions have been faithfully reproduced. At the heart of the game is GP mode, which has you racing all the other characters in a series of cups. 50cc races allow even complete gimps to have fun, while the 150cc setting is incredibly tough – much harder than Mario Kart 64's equivalent thanks to the viciously swerving CPU karts.

Time Trial mode is another Mario Kart stalwart. You've got the track to yourself and three laps to show what you can do. A ghost kart retraces your best lap so you can see where you're going wrong. Here's where you really appreciate the subtlety of the karts' handling, and can practise techniques like powersliding.

But Mario Kart's pièce de icing sur le cake has always been its multiplayer options. And if you haven't yet invested in a link-up cable, now's the time. Even with just one cart, four Yoshis can go head-to-head on a choice of four tracks. Better than that, if everyone's got their own cart, you can race on any of the game's tracks or – best of all – engage in balloon-bursting battle mode contests.

Distilling everything that's great about Nintendo games into one tiny cartridge, Mario Kart Super Circuit should immediately settle atop everyone's shopping list. It's brilliant from the moment you switch it on, and so blooming difficult it'll be weeks before you've unlocked all its secrets. ●

★ They resemble overgrown breezeblocks, but Thwomps will have you dropping bricks.

Get Karter

Mario Kart Super Circuit is a thoroughbred racer. Let's trace its lineage...

1996



★ Mario Kart 64 arrived in 1996. The N64's polygon-pushing power gave it proper 3D scenery and a four-player split-screen mode, although it was a bit easy.

Nintendo have already showed demo footage of Mario and Luigi karting on the Gamecube. A next-gen Mario Kart is a virtual cert.

1992



★ In 1992, Super Mario Kart on the SNES revolutionised racing games with its Mode 7 graphics and pin-sharp handling.

2001



★ Mario Kart Super Circuit squeezes all the fun of the first two games into one tiny GBA cart.

Top Tip

There are lots of driving tricks to master, but the first should be the spin turn. Hold A and B and steer left or right to get out of tricky jams.

"Distilling everything that's great about Nintendo's games in one tiny cartridge"



KART TO KART

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Colourful and cheery. A Mario game through 'n' through.

GAMEPLAY

It's ace, finely tuned to be both challenging and fun.

LIFESPAN

20 tracks, 20 more to unlock, plus tons of link-up options.

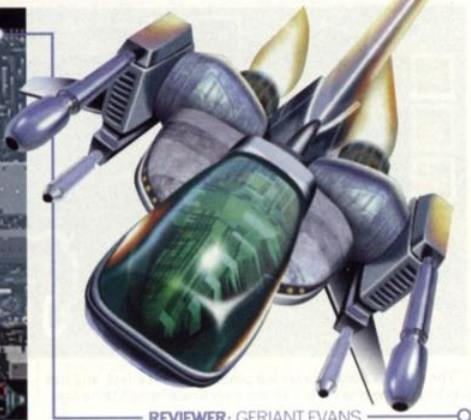
DIFFICULTY

Easy to get into but ultra tough at the highest levels.

ADVANCE OPINION

Mario Kart's friendly exterior hides a steely heart that'll stretch even the skillset of gamers. An absolute must.

95%



REVIEWER: GERIANT EVANS

PHALANX

An old-skool 2D shooter is resurrected for the small screen. Let the button hammering commence...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
BBI
- PHONE**
02380 653 377
- WEB**
www.kemco-games.com
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Battery
- LINK-UP**
No

"Our fave feature has to be the ability to turn off your GBA and restart where you left off"

Okay, so you're not looking at anything new here (it came out on the SNES for starters) and it's pretty much everything you'd expect from a side scrolling 2D shooter. Not the most positive start to a review ever, but stick with it – this

paragraph is meant in a good way.

Naturally, you're in one of those galaxy-saving positions and the only option is to get into your tiny spaceship throw yourself at the legions of screen-filling airborne nasties on your own. Thankfully you've got a decent range of impressive and varied power-ups at your disposal to help mop up the alien scumbags who get in your way. Your ship is also capable of sustaining some damage – removing that frustrating one-hit-one-kill rule from many shooters – and has three adjustable manoeuvrability settings to make navigating enclosed environments a little easier. It's also one of the fairest



★ Thanks to your variable thrusters, navigating enclosed spaces like this isn't as hard as it looks. Phew.



★ You can't see it here, but the backgrounds move at an astonishing pace, showing off the GBA's 2D capabilities.

shooters we've played. Rather than just being penned in by an unfair barrage of incoming fire, there's always a way out of the carnage, so you never feel like your being cheated out of a life. Lastly, and perhaps our fave feature, has to be the ability to turn off your GBA and restart where you left off. A beautiful addition to this cart.

If you're a 2D shooter fan in general, or just fancy something to test your reflexes for a while, you could do much worse than this. Yes, it's unoriginal but still highly enjoyable and definitely recommended. ●

Top Tip

Don't bother saving your bombs for bosses. Instead use them to escape out of tricky situations and saving your power-ups.

HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES

LOOK N' FEEL

Tiny sprites but plenty of them. The bosses are impressive though.

GAMEPLAY

Classic fast and furious blasting action, minus the frustration.

LIFESPAN

Not bad. High score junkies will be at this one for ages.

DIFFICULTY

Very difficult later on, and a constant test for your reflexes.

ADVANCE OPINION

There's nothing new here, but saying that – it's arguably the best shooter on the Advance.

81%



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT

MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX

Know your can-can fakie from your toothpick grind? Thought not.

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Activision
- PHONE
01753 756100
- WEB
www.activision.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
Now

There seems to be a new extreme sports games for every day of the week at the moment, and if you're scratching your head, wondering what on earth all this BMXing business is all about, or who Mat Hoffman is, then fear not, because a few simple plays of the training mode in the game will enlighten you. Anyone that's never played a BMX game before will instantly take to training mode, because you can be taken through every aspect of the game and get a guided tour of the trick catalogue too. It's worth paying attention, because you're going to need to keep a loads of tricks up your sleeve if you want to progress through the six large levels.

TopTip

Go through all the training levels when you first start, because they'll help you get the hang of how to do the tricks.



★ Grinding is a dead easy way to get plenty of points and impress the ladies. Honestly. Er...

The action itself is split into four different types of game mode – Career, Tournament, Free Ride and Time Trial. The last two are pretty self explanatory, and it's with the Career and Tournament modes that you'll have most fun and spend most of your playing time. In the former, you'll have to complete set tasks in order to earn magazine covers. The more covers you get your hands on, the more levels you'll unlock. Simple. But it's in Tournament mode that the pressure's really on, because you have to beat all the other riders by performing the best tricks and so scoring the most points. At first, you'll probably struggle to get any real points, but just keep plugging away.

Although it's not as good as its cousin, *Tony Hawk's 2*, *Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX* is an enjoyable and action packed extreme sports game, and you'll have lots of fun playing it. With eight real riders and loads of different modes, there's plenty to do, and the learning curve is such that you won't get annoyed or bored. Well worth a ride. ●



★ Fill up the special bar to pull off some amazing tricks that are worth absolutely loads of points.

"An enjoyable and action packed extreme sports game"

HOFF GOSSIP

LOOK N' FEEL

Detailed visuals make this pretty pleasing on the eye.

GAMEPLAY

There are a few niggles, but this is easy to get into and hard to put down.

LIFESPAN

There are loads of mode and stacks of levels, so you'll be playing for yonks.

DIFFICULTY

Pretty easy at first, but hard enough so you won't complete this in a hurry.

ADVANCE OPINION

Not as much fun as *Tony Hawk's 2*, but *Mat Hoffman's* is an action packed, and fun filled extreme sports game.

79%



★ There are four levels: prehistoric, medieval, pirates and space, and three difficulty settings.

REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY

FORTRESS

They could have called it *Fortris*, and probably did think about it. Is it as simple as Tetris with castles?

GAMEINFO

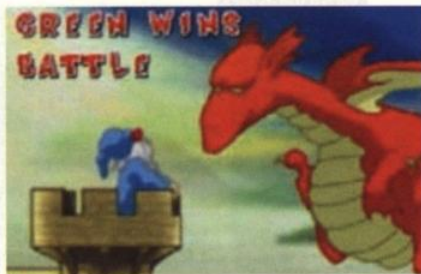
- PUBLISHER
THQ/Majesco
- PHONE
01483 767 656
- WEB
www.majescosales.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
On the Cart
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
November

"Although there's plenty of action, the game feels empty and tiresomely familiar"

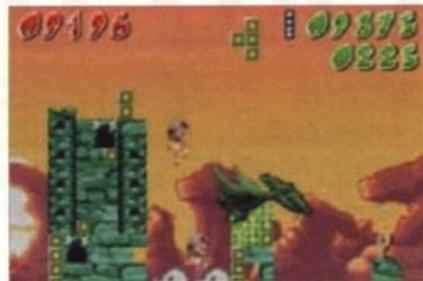
Bricks falling from the sky? A *Tetris* knock-off, you might immediately think, but *Fortress* isn't about lining shapes up and making them vanish. On the contrary: landing in one of four time zones, your goal is to heap blocks up into a citadel, and then defend it using bonus weapons that also topple from the heavens. When a piece completes a rectangle it turns into a solid rock wall that will protect your Twerp army from attack, whether by the CPU or a linked human.

You'll find three modes of play and three difficulty settings, although in each case all that really changes is the score needed to win, and the length of time before weapons begin to drop. Visually it's unsophisticated, and the fantasy scenarios differ only aesthetically.

In addition to this monotonous gameplay style, it's also frustratingly hard to plot a strategy without tons of trial and



★ Creatures – dragons, aliens – who aren't controlled by a player and are indiscriminate in their assaults, hound you.



★ If your structure grows too high for you to add pieces effectively, you may have to knock bits down yourself.

error. A beginners' practice mode would help you understand about

constructing solid foundations, positioning weapons or summoning beasts, but instead it's all down to perseverance. Only after many lost fortresses will you crack the idea of building large tower sections early in order to rush for the victory points, or steadily erecting good fortifications for weapons in case of early harassment.

Although there's action aplenty, the game feels empty and tiresomely familiar. Even when you've invested the time to formulate a strategy for your cannons, or discovered how Twerps can be made to rebuild damaged turrets, it all feels like an upside-down variation on that old-school puzzler. ●

Top Tip!

Build structures eight blocks high by three blocks wide and they'll turn into wizard towers that can direct the local wildlife at your enemy.

BLOCKED OFF

LOOK N' FEEL

Is visually cluttered but boasts some neat animations.

GAMEPLAY

Subtle nuances make it more than just a case of line-up-the-blocks

LIFESPAN

Short; it's repetitive and the levels don't differ much.

DIFFICULTY

There's no practice mode – you'll struggle to figure out what's going on!

ADVANCE OPINION

Opinion: It swipes a popular concept and twists it uncomfortably, but there's nifty strategy in there.

64%



REVIEWER: JONTI DAVIES

MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Infogrames
- **PHONE**
020 7938 4488
- **WEB**
www.capcom.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
December

"Cool ol' Megaman finds himself trapped in a world of computer viruses"

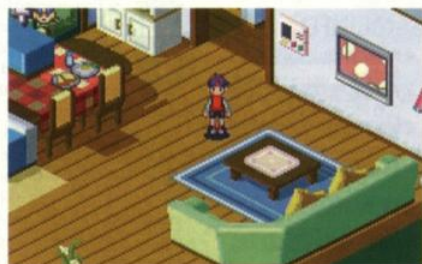
Capcom's first ever Game Boy Advance release (known as *Rockman EXE* in Japan), *Megaman Battle Network* is, to be brutally honest, a bit dull. Good ol' Megaman, champion of the arcade platform genre, finds himself trapped in a world of computer viruses, Tokyo dormitories and a disturbingly Ash-like kid. So, taking the role of Megaman's trainer, you set out on a journey through virus-infected hard disc corridors, giving Megaman orders on how to battle the viruses he faces. These battles take the form of turn-based scraps, in which you take it in turns (very sporting, that!) to give each other slaps. No, it's not exactly exhilarating stuff, but it is... uh, it is... safe. That's it, a safe, traditional RPG style of gameplay. It won't give you an adrenaline rush, but it is mildly distracting...

Besides *Battle Network*'s pedestrian gameplay, the game's visuals are splendid. Its audio is okay, too, and everything's presented in slick Capcom fashion. More than any other redeeming feature, though, *Megaman Battle Network* is a sprawling great adventure. And it does have a few quirks, such as a multiplayer battle mode, that make this fairly entertaining fodder for role-playing devotees.

This isn't up to the standard of most other *Megaman* games, and it's clearly derivative of certain other RPG battle types, but what's here is passable fare. Ultimately, though, this is a game that'll be quickly forgotten. ●

Top Tip

Try to remember that the endless battles will cease once the power has been turned off. This will help to avert any potential for long-term psychological damage.



★ Home, sweet home. Just another day in the mad world of *Megaman Battle Network*!



★ That's you, the conversationalist. Give it a rest will ya? We can't hear ourselves think!

MEGA VERDICT

LOOK 'N' FEEL

It's Megaman and no mistaking. It's very Japanese. But it's decidedly unspectacular.

GAMEPLAY

Dull, dull, and dull. Like chess gone very badly wrong.

LIFESPAN

Admittedly expansive, but who could really stand more than a few hours of this?

DIFFICULTY

It's hard to progress quickly, and it's even harder to persevere with.

ADVANCE OPINION

Imagine taking all the bad bits from a sub-par RPG and tarting them up with the Megaman façade. Not good.

35%



★ A house room full of arcade cabinets squeezed into half a custard cream. Technology, eh?

REVIEWER: JONATHAN DAVIES

MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS

Do not adjust your GBA. It's meant to look like this.

GAMEINFO

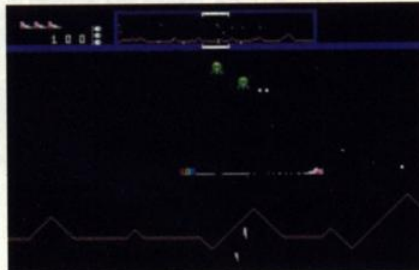
- **PUBLISHER**
Midway
- **PHONE**
020 7938 4488
- **WEB**
www.midway.com
- **PRICE**
TBA
- **SAVE**
None
- **LINK-UP**
No
- **OUT**
November

"The original coin-ops together would fill most of a Transit van"

Get time-warped back into an arcade of the early '80s and you'd notice three things about the games on offer: (1) the graphics are crap, (2) they only cost 10p, and (3) they're blooming hard. The good old days, eh? But on a handheld that's capable of so much more?

A typical go on *Defender*, for instance, lasts about 34 seconds. You zoom along while hammering the fire button to send tirades of laser fire streaking across the screen. Then you misjudge the position of a Baiter by one pixel and explode in a shower of dots. Its hairs-on-your-chest difficult but still as exciting as it was 20 years ago, and perfectly converted for the Game Boy Advance.

The noble game of *Joust*, meanwhile, has aged less well. You sit astride a giant bird, pressing A to make its wings flap and trying to knock other jousters off their steeds by being a



★ The perfect conversion. Still gum-achingly difficult, but so very satisfying the whole time you're alive.



★ Just look at the sumptuous parallax backgrounds! That was a joke.

bit higher than them. All decidedly medieval-feeling these days.

Likewise *Sinistar*, which involves flying through space shooting smudgy baddies and bouncing off rocks. Retro-buffs would doubtless tell you it's a vital piece of gaming history, but, erm, maybe you had to be there.

But *Robotron 2084* truly is a vintage masterpiece. Shoot for your life as swarms of robots close inexorably in on your position. It's knackered here, however, by not having two sets of controls like the original, so you can't run in one direction while firing in another.

Considering the original coin-ops would together fill most of a Transit van, this is a nifty way to test your skills against the gamers of yore. ●

Top Tip

When playing *Defender*, never, ever stay still for more than a nanosecond. May seem obvious but there you go.

HELP THE AGED

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Perfect conversions evoke a true vintage atmosphere. Lovely.

GAMEPLAY

Defender's fantastic and the others are still quite fun.

LIFESPAN

They've lasted 20 years and will doubtless last 20 more.

DIFFICULTY

Ha. You won't know the meaning of the word till you've played these.

ADVANCE OPINION

OK, they look a bit crap. But these are ideal whip-out-'n'-play tests of your gaming mettle, and spot-on conversions.

78 9/10



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

FROGGER'S ADVENTURES TEMPLE OF THE FROG

Hop to save your swampy home in this fly-lickin' good puzzle adventure.

swampland habitat. Rather than wandering around in the usual overhead adventure style, Frogger can only hop in four directions, one or two spaces at a time. Consequently, the game plays like a puzzle in places, where you have to push switches and time your leaps to avoid the many enemies that wander in fixed patterns. Arcade action raises its head too, in the form of moving logs, lily pads and roads, which hark back to the original coin-op.

The cute cartoon visuals are very bold and colourful, making this a GBA game you can play in the kind of lighting conditions that make the likes of *Tony Hawk's* and *Castlevania* vanish into murky blackness. It isn't a huge step forward for handheld gaming, or anything like that, but it's simple, fun to play, and satisfying when you safely negotiate a busy road or persistent enemy. All the bosses are extremely easy to beat, as is the game as a whole, but younger players will certainly appreciate its simple pleasures. ●

GAMEINFO

PUBLISHER

Konami

PHONE

01895 853000

WEB

www.konami.com

PRICE

£35

SAVE

Battery

LINK-UP

No

OUT

Now

Frogger started out life simply hopping across a road. That was dangerous enough, considering how much softer than a car tyre a frog is, but now the poor little slimer has got 15 levels of far more hazardous terrain to negotiate. Erk!

The aim is to collect items that will allow you to journey to the Temple of the Frog, the place that holds the secret to preserving Frogger's dying

Top Tip

Use the floaty A-button jump to get over seemingly impossible gaps, and to avoid the attentions of those enemies



★ As his size relative to cars, trucks, and these sharks demonstrates, Frogger is actually about seven feet tall...



★ ...And when you're a giant amphibian in a cruel, hard world, the only thing to do is search for that froggy temple.

FROGGER FACTS

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Plenty of visual appeal, and responsive, intuitive controls.

GAMEPLAY

There isn't much to it, but what's there is simple and enjoyable.

LIFESPAN

Perhaps not the most long-lived game ever created.

DIFFICULTY

Easy. A good choice for younger players and gaming novices.

ADVANCE OPINION

Frogger's good looks and simple gameplay make this adventure an appealing package. Don't expect it to last too long.

78

ADVANCE

63

HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

Magic! JK Rowling's spellbinding masterpiece is now a top quality GBA adventure. Read the book, then play the game.

REVIEWER: TOM EAST



★ Learning spells is simple. All you have to do is follow the professor's lead and you will have a new trick.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Electronic Arts
- **PHONE**
01932 450 000
- **WEB**
www.harrypotter.co.uk
- **PRICE**
£30
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
No
- **OUT**
Now

et's face facts. Games are better than books. Any sane person would rather sit on the bus playing *Super Mario Advance* than reading *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*. But *Harry Potter* is a bit different. Everyone loves reading about the adventures of this little wizard.

Luckily after a blast on this puzzle packed adventure, everyone will want to play as Potter as well. It's got plenty of book moments to keep hardcore fans happy and some of the tasks are truly testing. Take the late night meeting with arch rival Draco Malfoy. In the book HP finds it easy to walk around Hogwarts after hours, but sneaking past the prefects in the game is tough work and you're deducted five house points each time you're spotted. You'll need a bigger brain than school swat Hermione if you're going to complete all 29 tasks.



★ Use your new magic spells to take out these trolls. But don't get too close or they will chew on your cloak.



★ Not all of the little wizards at Hogwarts are nice. This is Draco Malfoy, Harry's arch rival, and he will do anything to get HP expelled. Including getting into a spells scrap.

Luckily our Harry is more skillful than the entire Man United midfield and he's always willing to learn new tricks. To learn magic spells first you have to follow one of your school pals to class and then follow the teacher's lead for new spells. The professor will point his wand in

different directions and you have to mimic his actions. Then you can take out the trolls who patrol the forbidden forest, have a scrap with your arch rival, Draco Malfoy and get involved in some games of the wizarding football, Quidditch.

Yep, unlike *Harry Potter* on Game Boy Color, the GBA version of the game includes the top wizard sport. As in the book you have to get on your flying broom stick and chase after Draco to nab Neville Longbottom's snitch. Then you take to the skies for a top-down game of Quidditch which has you keeping 'em peeled for the Snitch – a gold ball with wings – and then swooping to catch it. Nab it and you'll be awarded some much sought after Gryffindor house points.

The fun doesn't stop with Quidditch either. After messing around in the skies it's on to more serious matters as you have to chase after Hagrid's animals, make your way through a maze in the goblin-run bank, Gringott's, and prevent the Philosopher's Stone from getting into the hands of evil wizard Voldemort. That's in addition to exploring the huge school that is Hogwarts.

Although *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* is supposed to be a children's book, it's not only the under 10's who enjoy them. The same goes for this game. While it would have been easy to make a kids game – check the crappy PSone Potter-based game for evidence of this – this is a tough adventure which everyone will enjoy. Bring on the next game in the series, *The Chamber of Secrets* ●

Top Tip

To get past a bush, hit it with a magic spell and avoid the flying thorns. Repeat this trick three times and watch it explode.

HP in the House

When you start you will be assigned to a house by the sorting hat. Harry puts on the sorting hat and he's assigned to Gryffindor House. Now, in addition to

finding the Philosopher's Stone, he also has to make sure Gryffindor beat Slytherin as the best House in Hogwarts. You will be deducted house points for

sneaking about after dark, but luckily you can win them all back if you grab the Snitch (small flying gold thingy) in a furious game of Quidditch.



★ This is Quidditch and that gold thing is the snitch. Grab it and you will win the game. 150 house points to Gryffindor!



★ But if you are caught breaking house rules, all your hard earned Quidditch points will be removed.



★ Here's the House points chart. Your team, Gryffindor, are in the lead. Be a good wizard and you'll win the house cup.

"The professor will wave his wand in different directions and you have to mimic his actions"

IT'S SPELLBINDING

LOOK 'N' FEEL

This 2D isometric Hogwarts is pretty impressive and Harry looks smart.

GAMEPLAY

All twenty nine tasks are varied – playing as Potter is a treat.

LIFESPAN

With 29 tricky tasks, you'll be playing this top adventure for some time.

DIFFICULTY

Sneaking around Hogwarts is tough. This is the hardest HP game on the shelves.

ADVANCE OPINION

Like the books, this is a gripping adventure packed with dialogue and classic moments from JK Rowling's masterpiece.

86%



★ Pacmania (above) has the chunkiest graphics, but Pac-Man Arrangement (left) is by far the best game.

REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

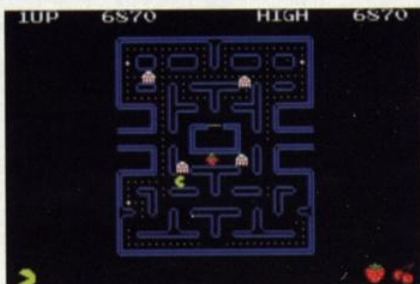
PAC-MAN COLLECTION

Before Mario and Lara Croft, there was only one game superstar...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Namco
- PHONE
020 7938 4488
- WEB
www.namco.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
TBA

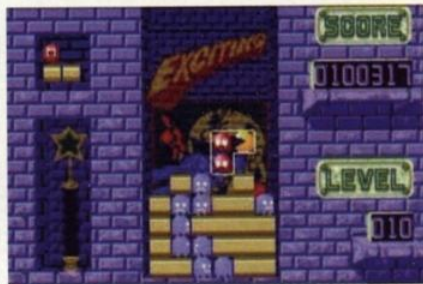
"One of the most enduring ideas from the golden age of arcades"



★ The original Pac-Man. You can play with this zoomed out view to get the big picture, or zoomed in for clarity.

Pac-Man is fantastic. Although his games aren't as popular as they were in his early-'80s heyday, the whole pill-munching, ghost-gobbling concept is one of the most enduring ideas from the golden age of the arcade, and is jealously guarded by Namco – hence its absence from virtually every emulator site. But why bother searching for dodgy knock-offs when you can play a compilation this good? It features the original Pac-Man, and the Tetris-style Pac Attack, which have been seen on previous GBC compilations, plus the hit-and-miss isometric title Pacmania, which isn't great. But the one compelling reason to own this cart is the terrific Pac-Man Arrangement, the kind of update that Pac-Man has been begging for.

The graphics have been revamped, of course, but not to the gameplay-ruining extent they were in *Pacmania*. This time



★ Pac Attack is an unusual sort of puzzle game. You have to match up blocks and send Pac-Man on ghost-eating raids.

the characters are all very small, so you can fit most of the playing area on the screen, and the dots kind of wobble and shimmer in a very nice Jeff Minter fashion. The levels change, offering new visual themes as well as ramps, warp pads, and speed-up arrows that enable Pac to zoom past ghosts.

There are new breeds of ghost with special powers, but not to the detriment of the classic *Pac-Man* playability, and bonus items appear that offer several amusing and useful abilities.

It's just superb. Wickedly fast, highly skillful – the kind of thing that ought to have retro fans everywhere draining their Game Boy Advance batteries with approval. Outstanding stuff, get it in this instant. ●

Top Tip

Wait until all the ghosts are out of the nest before eating a power pellet, otherwise they won't be affected.

PAC IS BACK

LOOK 'N' FEEL

All of the games look just like their arcade counterparts.

GAMEPLAY

Pac-Man hasn't survived this long by having dodgy gameplay.

LIFESPAN

The lack of a high score save feature is one big annoyance.

DIFFICULTY

Different settings offer something for everyone.

ADVANCE OPINION

Think of it as one outstanding arcade update with three complete bonus games of variable quality. A retro treat.

90 10/10



ADVANCE



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

NO RULES GET PHAT

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
TDK
- PHONE
01462 456780
- WEB
www.tdk.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
November

"There's no real flow to the game. A real stop-start experience"

Extrême sports games are definitely the flavour of the moment. Well, they have been ever since Activision introduced us to *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*. So how better to tart up a dull platform game than to make the lead character have a skateboard stuck

to his feet? A cunning plan...

No Rules: Get Phat is a frustrating little game. You're supposed to jump on platforms and shoot your catapult at the alien invaders who've infested your home town, but the speed at which your skateboard moves

Top Tip

Wait until an alien shoots at you, then duck under its bullet before jumping up to deliver your own catapult zapshot.



★ Flat visuals that wouldn't look out of place on Game Boy Color. This game feels like it's been through a blandiser.

Grab your skateboard and grind some rails to see off an uncool alien invasion



★ If you don't yet own *Tony Hawk's* please don't even read this review. Go on. Clear off. Turn the page!

means the only way to do it without continually falling off the edge of buildings, is by inching forward, bit by bit. When you do find a nice flat area to bomb along, the game will stick an alien in your path, giving you no time to react. The way your character jumps is irritating too – while having him hop a few inches off the ground, then slam back down again, might be how real skateboards work, it doesn't make negotiating alien-packed platforms very easy. Or enjoyable. Plus, if realistic handling was the developer's aim, why not put some inertia on the board rather than have it go from flat out to dead stop in an instant? It just doesn't make sense.

There's just no real flow to the game. It's a very stop-start experience. Grinding rails serves no real purpose, other than putting your little dude at risk of falling over (again), and there's little sense of achievement to be had from successfully rolling through levels filled with similar, repetitive set pieces. No rules, and not much fun either. ●

PHATBOY SLIM

LOOK N' FEEL

Cartoon-style visuals that aren't a huge leap forward from GBC.

GAMEPLAY

There's nothing here that'll persuade you to part with your hard-earned readies.

LIFESPAN

Frustration will get the better of you before you finish it.

DIFFICULTY

Its toughness is largely down to poor controls and dodgy design.

ADVANCE OPINION

It might have skateboards and an 'extreme' name, but this feeble platformer is a million miles away from *Tony Hawk's*.

35%

ADVANCE

67



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT



LEGO RACERS 2

Playing with bricks can be dangerous, so stick to Lego, eh?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Lego Media
- PHONE**
020 8600 7200
- WEB**
www.legomedia.com
- PRICE**
£30
- SAVE**
Battery
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
October

"There's nothing much wrong with *Lego Racers 2*, it's just that it ain't quite *Mario Kart*"



★ The sub games really help to spice things up, and ensure that you don't get bored.



★ You can even change your character's clothes and face. Now that is customisation

Trying to take on one of the best games ever was always going to be a tough task, and, when put up against the genius of *Mario Kart*, *Lego Racers 2* stumbles before it reaches the finishing line. It's like comparing the best film you've ever seen with a documentary about cakes. You may even be really interested in baking, and fondant icing may well be your thing, and yet when compared to your favourite film, the cake programme just doesn't get watched. It's not even that *Lego Racers 2* is that bad, because there's nothing much wrong with it; it's just that it ain't *Mario Kart*.

It tries so hard too. You can choose to take part in the usual straight forward kart races against various block-headed opponents, or try your hand at story mode, in which you have to wander around the Lego town, talking to the inhabitants and challenging them to races, in a bid to win all the golden bricks in the town. There's a decent sprinkling of effective power-ups, and even loads of neat features like bonus games and special games, in which you have to chase people, race to construct things or collect things, and yet it's just not enough to challenge the plumber.

Oh well. Those that are Lego mad, or are sick of the sight of Mario should give *Lego Racers 2* a shot, because it is an enjoyable and challenging game, it's just not the best in the genre. It was always going to have that problem and credit to Lego Media for having a decent stab. In the future, *Lego Racers 3* may well give Mazza a run for his money, but right now this falls slightly short. ●

Top Tip

Make sure you are lined up straight behind your opponent when you use the rocket power-up - that way you should hit them!

BRICKING IT

LOOK N' FEEL

Plenty of detail, and Lego blocks galore. Not bad at all.

GAMEPLAY

Intuitive and as you'd expect from a karting game.

LIFESPAN

Loads to see and do, and it'll take you ages to complete it all.

DIFFICULTY

Easy to get into, and pretty tough to master. As it should be.

ADVANCE OPINION

A very slick and enjoyable karting game, with plenty to do and loads of fun to be had. It's just not *Mario Kart* though.

79%



★ These local toughs have decided to take up dodgeball instead of smoking. Good on 'em!

REVIEWER: JONTI DAVIES

SUPER DODGEBALL ADVANCE

Remember playground dodgeball? No neither do we.

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Ubisoft
- PHONE
01932 838 230
- WEB
www.ubisoft.co.uk
- PRICE
£34.99
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
November

"It's quick, slick and it's far removed from the school game of your youth"

Thoughts of sweaty gyms and dodgy PE teachers hardly go hand in hand with thoughts of super-duper old skool gameplay. But the two can mix, and Atlus' update of the NES classic *Dodgeball* proves that. It's great fun.

Super Dodgeball Advance plays just like those old PE lessons did. Two sides occupy the two halves of the court, and the ball has to be thrown between team members and then – at the right moment – into the face/groin of a player on the opposing team. It's very amusing, especially when you throw the ball at someone and they go flying head first onto the floor. Well quite amusing, anyway.

In typical retro style, *Dodgeball Advance* doesn't foul up by complicating matters. There's a great gameplay dynamic at the heart of *Super Dodgeball Advance*, and that's good enough



★ It's hard to play dodgeball and ice-skate at the same time, but it's great fun. Honestly.



★ Just watch you don't get your ankles caught in the mesh.

Top Tip

Jump when someone's about to throw the ball at you, and always keep the opposition guessing by using mad tactics.

to positively influence the game's longevity. Throw in the multiplayer element and there's some serious time-gobbling gameplay here.

Unlike most sports games, *Dodgeball Advance* even has its own distinctive look. The colours used throughout are typical of developer Atlus' values, and the play surfaces and backdrops are inspired. Also the ball used is just the right size so as to be highly visible and relatively simple to throw and catch. Everything's just so.

All told, *Super Dodgeball Advance* should sit alongside *ISS* in the sports section of your games library. It's quick, it's slick, and it's far removed from the school game of your long-past youth. Top stuff. ●

DON'T DODGE THIS GAME

LOOK-N-FEEL

Excellent, bright Japanese visuals.

GAMEPLAY

Like some back-to-basics *Speedball* precursor, this plays superbly.

LIFESPAN

Multiplayer, multiplayer. Like all good sports games it'll last you an age with a buddy.

DIFFICULTY

Easy to pick up quickly, hard to master.

ADVANCE-OPINION

A delicious slice of old skool gameplay. Fast, fun and obvious. Don't miss it!

85%



REVIEWER: ADAM WARING

RAMPAGE PUZZLE ATTACK

A monster of a puzzler, or a puzzling monstrosity?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Midway
- PHONE**
020 7938 4488
- WEB**
www.midway.com
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Password
- UNK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
Now

"It breaks the golden rule of puzzle games – keep things simple"

The original *Rampage World Tour* and its sequel, *Rampage 2: Universal Tour* on Game Boy Color were truly terrible. Taking control of various monsters, you had to knock down level after identical level of cities full of tower blocks. Thankfully, unlike the monsters' previous outings, this is a straight puzzler, and aside from a few frames of incidental animation, you won't even notice they're there.

It works like this. At the bottom of the screen are a bunch of different-coloured square blobs. You have a row of blocks at the top of the screen, and can switch neighbouring blocks around before dropping them in pairs into the playfield. Diamond-shaped blocks destroy all same-coloured blocks on contact. Clear the screen in this way and it's on to the next level.

There are four variations on the theme. In Clear Mode, your job is simply to get rid of every last coloured block in the playing area. Puzzle Mode gives you a limited number of drops to clear pre-designed puzzles. Rescue Mode sees you rescuing your trapped chums by removing the blocks on the roofs of their cages. Finally, Marathon Mode follows the great Tetris tradition – stay alive as long as you can.

Unfortunately, *Rampage: Puzzle Attack* breaks that golden rule of puzzle games: keep things simple. Switching your row of blocks to get the ones you want is fiddly in the extreme, and completely spoils the fluidity of gameplay essential to a good puzzle game. And it isn't particularly challenging, either. Even in Puzzle Mode, we managed to zip through all 50 puzzles within a couple of hours. Next. ●

Top Tip

Try setting off chain reactions, where one clearing of blocks causes others to connect and also disappear.



★ The lacks the simplicity and therefore addictiveness of *Tetris* or *Super Bust-A-Move*. Dullsville.



★ Vertical block puzzlers really don't work well on the GBA's liddle wide screen. Put the game the other way!

RAMPAGE RATING

LOOK'N'FEEL

The playing area is bright and uncluttered, which is the main thing.

GAMEPLAY

It's a simple enough idea, but the controls are annoyingly fiddly.

LIFESPAN

It lacks the compulsion of *Tetris*. You won't keep coming back...

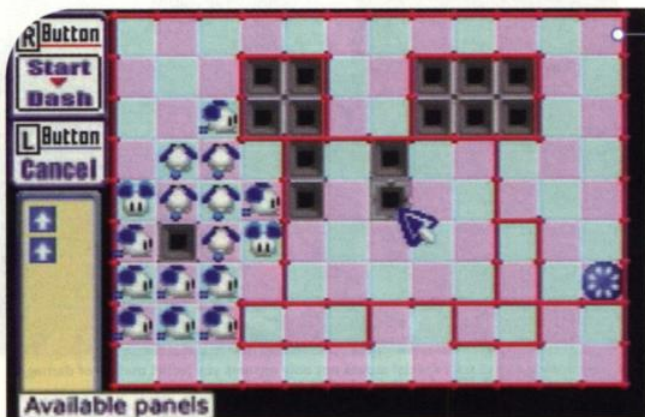
DIFFICULTY

Despite the awkward controls, you'll shoot through the levels in no time.

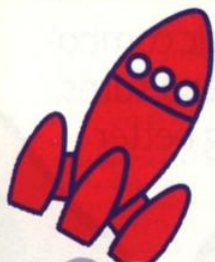
ADVANCE OPINION

One of those ideas which probably looked really good on paper, but in practice it's far too fiddly to be much fun.

55%



REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY



CHUCHU ROCKET!

Escape the world's most elaborate mousetrap, with space technology.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Sega/Infogrames
- **PHONE**
0208 222 9700
- **WEB**
www.sega.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November

"Built from fiendishly simple elements, but play quickly becomes chaotic"

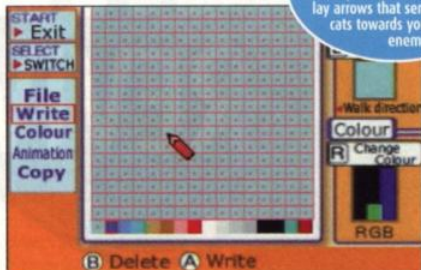
Just in case you're wondering: chuchu means mouse. And the rocket part? Well, that's the very essence of this bonkers Japanese puzzler. Your mission is to help a bunch of mice escape their cat captors by rocket. Yes, it sounds dopey, but it worked on the Dreamcast and this is a direct port of that best-selling game.

Although the visuals are minimalist, the overall appearance soon takes second place to the compelling quick-fire action, as you lay down directions on a chessboard to guide stupid mice past obstacles and rodent-chomping cats to the safety of your space rocket.

There are four modes of play (single-player puzzles, time-limited challenges, all-out multiplayer war and multiplayer

Top Tip

As well as directing the mice towards your rocket, remember to lay arrows that send cats towards your enemy!



★ A built-in drawing tool enables you to design (and animate) new characters to replace the mice and cats.

★ Four-player battle mode is a frantic affair, even if the computer controls three of your opponents.

team games) and the Game Boy Advance version has a total of 2500 new puzzles on top of those in the original Dreamcast game. Yep, you did read that number correctly. This title is heeeeeeeeee: and it even comes with a level designer for you to create and swap maps of your own devising.

Like all great head-scratchers, *ChuChu Rocket!* is built from fiendishly simple elements, but play quickly becomes chaotic, especially in link-up mode which is where it excels. Laying down routes to guide mice to your spaceship while simultaneously trying to steer them away from three of your mates, all the while avoiding giant orange cats has all the compelling frenzy of *Bomberman* or multiplayer *Tetris*. If you don't have any mates fear not, because the CPU can take you on, or you can attempt one of the many lone challenges. It is, quite simply, hours – nay, months – of fun wrapped up into one tiny rodent-sized package. ●

ROCKETS AWAY

LOOK N' FEEL

Childishly simple and sickeningly cute, you'll love these micees to pieces.

GAMEPLAY

Addictive, frustrating, puzzling, daft. You'll be hooked from the first minute you play.

LIFESPAN

With its built-in map designer, this could last you forever and a day.

DIFFICULTY

Starts off easy enough but soon builds up to head-scratching chaos.

ADVANCE OPINION

Hours and hours can pass and you'll never look up from the screen. It's magnificently engrossing.

90%

ADVANCE





★ Activating one of your special moves not only ensures you inflict masses of damage on your opponent, but looks rather splendid, too. Go on, my son!

REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Ubi Soft
- PHONE
01932 838 230
- WEB
www.ubisoft.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
November

Capcom's classic combo-fuelled scrapper returns, and it's looking better than ever...

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 X REVIVAL

Oh come on, if you don't know what this is about then you want shooting. *SSF2* is one of Capcom's finest titles ever – certainly one of the best SNES offerings in its day – so it's all the more pleasing to hear that this is even *better* than it was first time round.

For those who've never sampled its delights before, *Revival* lets you choose from up to 16 different characters (with two extra to unlock) before



★ The new revamped anime artwork is fantastic throughout and keeps the game feeling nice and fresh.

putting them against each other one-on-one. Each and every fighter has his or her own strengths and weakness, from Chun Li's superb speed and aerial ability, to Russian wrestler Zangief's great power and defence. Once chosen, it's then up to you to use your skill and dexterity to beat the living daylights out of each other with regular moves, special attacks or combinations of both. Once their health had been depleted over two rounds it's on to the next bout before facing the final four bosses – and an even steeper challenge. So nothing's changed there then, but when it's this good (and in the palm of your hand) you can't complain at all.

Just as you'd expect from a company that's been churning out high-class battlers for nearly 20 years, this is another magnificent gaming experience. Everything works exceptionally well on the small screen. The sprites themselves are incredibly well animated and detailed, and the clarity of the visuals make playing it on the GBAs rather dark screen very easy indeed. Furthermore, Capcom has included some updated anime-style artwork and ending sequences for all your favourite characters, which goes a long way to keeping the game feeling nice and fresh.

But it's the sheer playability of the title that really grips us. All the characters are perfectly balanced and varied, ensuring that no matter who you fight against, you'll have to change your tactics in order to succeed. The fighting system

in *Street Fighter* has been refined and tweaked and refined again, so it's no surprise to find that the game is really solid. You can't just win by hammering the buttons – like in many inferior fighters. You have to be fully aware of your character's strengths and best tactics, while having the skill needed to link together your repertoire of attacks and specials.

To top it all off, Capcom has added a variety of Time Attack and Survival modes to get your teeth into, and these go some way to ensuring it has single-player longevity as you attempt to top your high scores. Naturally though, the multi-player is where the game excels. Get a mate with a copy of the game and you'll be in two-player battle-heaven for quite some time. Definitely one of the GBAs' essential selection. ●

Top Tip

Activate as many special moves as possible to finish your opponents and, on completing the game, you'll open up a new character.

Break your knuckles...

Don't laugh – we're serious. *Street Fighter* gets so damn tricky at times (especially on the higher levels) that you'll find your fingers ache like hell after two hour scrapping binge. Much like *Mario Kart*, you have to make constant use of the shoulder buttons in order to beat your opponents. What's even weirder is the fact that *Street Fighter* traditionally uses six buttons – three each for various strengths of punch and kick. In order to actually pull off your favourite combos, you'll need to master the art of timing. By holding the light attack button for a split second longer, you'll execute a medium attack. It might seem tricky at first but, with a little practice it soon becomes second nature.



★ Pulling off combos successfully requires the use of all the GBA's buttons. You'll need the dexterity of an octopus.



★ Finish a fight with a special move and the screen erupts into a kaleidoscope of psychedelic insanity. Very satisfying, especially if you fancy a gloat.



★ Ryu shows Zangief who's the daddy. All your old favourites are back in action with a full compliment of moves and thumb-blistering combos. Top stuff.

WORD ON THE STREET

LOOK N' FEEL

Great new artwork and superbly intuitive controls. A real treat.

GAMEPLAY

Fast and frantic fighting, with plenty of depth to each character.

LIFESPAN

Grab another *Street Fighter*-loving mate and a link cable and it'll last ages.

DIFFICULTY

Absolutely rock-solid on the hardest settings. Tougher than ten dockers.

ADVANCE OPINION

As great to play now as it ever was, it's just like having the arcade machine in your pocket. Well worth the investment.

90
1/10



REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY

CREATURES

According to many philosophical definitions, Norns are actually 'alive'.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Swing!
- **PHONE**
00 49 2131 40 66 360
- **WEB**
www.creaturelabs.com
- **PRICE**
£30
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November

"The Norns grow, eat, breed, fall ill and die under the watchful eye of your babysitting representative"

This is one of those titles which makes you gasp, "How did they manage to make that for the Game Boy?" *The Creatures* concept was, for years, an artificial life simulator on the PC. Using neural network models, it encouraged you to nurture a group of cuddly critters called Norns.

With a few tweaks, this is basically a conversion of that program; the Norns still grow, eat, breed, fall ill and die under the watchful eye of your babysitting representative, Scrubby. It's fascinating, but not fast – either the most complex toy ever, or the most foolish adventure, depends on your taste.

The cartoony visuals are detailed and the land of Albia is lush, erring on the side of cluttered. To make it more challenging the three levels are not all available from the start – you can only explore new areas once your Norns have got there, so it behoves you to breed critters and set them off looking.



★ Sickness can be caused by ill nourishment, but it is possible to heal them with the right local ingredients.

Top Tip

The treetop portal will take you through to other worlds but you must have at least eight Norns before it becomes available.



★ Your avatar in Albia is a gormless looking fairy with big shoes. You administer gratification or pain through her.

Opening up areas of forest (sending the furry friends into cable cars for instance) is rewarding because it takes time.

And this is part of the problem. You're only ever able to influence the action from the sidelines. You can show your babies where the food is, and reward them with a tickle when they learn to eat. You can drop herbal medicine by them if they get sick, and spank them if they don't take it. You can ask them to "Come here and push button!" But they're doing the work, you just make suggestions. Much of your time is spent looking at a chart of how hungry they are, waiting for them to wake up, or cursing their lack of speed in getting into a lift.

Overall, though, there's more pleasure than pain. You can become obsessed simply playing ball with a tiny animal you've named and taught, watching her give birth to your next generation and then feeling a pang of sadness when she finally dies. It's a unique experience, if utterly bonkers. ●

STAYING ALIVE!

LOOK N' FEEL

The distinctive forest world feels cluttered because there are so many objects in it.

GAMEPLAY

Slow, but engrossing – like an over-complicated Tamagotchi.

LIFESPAN

You could be playing this indefinitely, although your original Norns will die out.

DIFFICULTY

Lots of patience required. It's hard to make definite progress.

ADVANCE OPINION

Repetitive but strangely fascinating, more like a living toy than a conventional game.

80%



REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

KAO THE KANGAROO

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Titus
- PHONE
01926 335400
- WEB
www.titusgames.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
Now

"There's absolutely nothing in here that you've not done before"

Oh dear – Universally the first thing everyone says when they start playing *Kao the Kangaroo*. It's impossible to even begin to imagine a more mediocre platformer than this, frankly pitiful effort. What in the wide, wide world of sports is going on here? How hard can it be?

Titus aren't exactly renowned for creating spectacular games (they were also responsible for the atrocious *Superman* on N64), but they could at least try and make a half decent game. It's not that, *Kao the Kangaroo* is particularly awful in any specific area. It's by no means an ugly game, for example. The collision detection isn't bad either and it all runs at a fair old pace – so it's very difficult to

Top Tip

If you find yourself in your local game shop with this in your hand, take a deep breath, put it back on the shelf and look for *Wario Land 4*.



★ Even the enemies are pretty unimaginative – there's nothing here you haven't seen a million times before.

Just what we need, another by-the-numbers platformer!



★ Okay, so it doesn't look that bad, but when you have games like *Wario Land 4* on the shelves, why bother?

figure out exactly what's wrong with it – that is until you realise you're not having any fun. At all.

So what did go wrong then? Well it simply boils down to the fact that there's absolutely *nothing* in here that you've not done before. It's your bog standard, run, jump, collect, run, jump-type affair, and that really is it. It's like having every bog-standard platformer that ever existed all rolled into one... um... bog standard platformer. There just isn't anything in here that gets your pulse racing. There's nothing to make you laugh, get excited or even raise an eyebrow – nothing!

So if you hadn't guessed, we don't like this very much. With the growing amount of decent platformers on Advance, you really shouldn't even give this one a second thought. In fact, forget about it altogether. If the developers couldn't be bothered with it – then neither should you. Now get it out of our sight and out of your head! ●

KANGERPOO

LOOK N' FEEL

Simple and plain dodgy. Looks like a 10 year old Amiga game.

GAMEPLAY

Jump, Run, Jump, Collect, Yawn, Jump – Repeat over and over. And over!

LIFESPAN

As long as it takes you to find your receipt and leg it back to the shop.

DIFFICULTY

Fairly tricky on later stages, we suppose – but then, who cares?

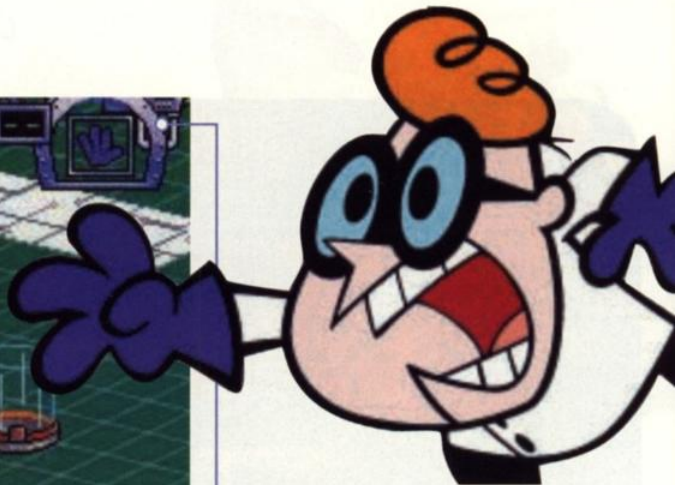
ADVANCE OPINION

As average, mediocre and tedious as average, mediocre and tedious get. Certainly not worth your 35 treasured notes.

29%

ADVANCE

75



REVIEWER: IAN HARRIS

DEXTER'S LAB

Seen the cartoon? This really is nothing like it, but in a good way.

GAMEINFO

PUBLISHER

Bam!

PHONE

0207 4287800

WEB

www.bam4fun.com

PRICE

£35

SAVE

Password

LINK-UP

No

OUT

Now

Dee Deel! Don't touch that button! Too late. Dexter's older sister has just cloned his sister and scattered her across his labyrinth-like laboratory. So guess what? Yep, it's up to the mad midget to rescue them and put his lab back to normal.

Keeps 'im off the streets.

You plod little Dexter around eight isometric levels in search of the clones. The drones, druids and robots baddies turn up to bother you, but don't pose much of a threat since you're far too nimble for them. Each clone has to be picked up with your telescopic claw and carried to the vacuum tube where she's sucked up to safety. All the levels are pretty samey, and come to think of it so are the puzzles. But that hardly matters. The pleasure of marching Dexter around his maze of mayhem

Top Tip!

When you first start a level, work out where the vacuum tube is. Then take each clone there as soon as you find it.



★ Don't hang around – there are oodles more Dee Dees skipping around waiting to be collected.

trying to figure out which switches do what is strangely compelling. The graphics are bold and cartoony, as are the sound effects from Dexter and his opponents. Dexter's Lab uses an isometric viewpoint, which means the controls take some adjusting to, and tapping the shoulder furiously to button to switch weapons quickly becomes frustrating. You'll play Dexter's Lab right up until the end. But once you've finished it, you're unlikely to return again. ●

"All the levels are pretty samey, and so are the puzzles, but that hardly matters"



★ Gotchal Now Dexter only has 99 more sisters to go. Not as tedious as it sounds. Honestly.

THROW THAT LEVER

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Bright and colourful and all moves along quick enough. No real grumbles.

GAMEPLAY

The action builds as Dexter gets further into his laboratory. Collect and blast capers

LIFESPAN

As long as it takes you to finish it. Two weeks, tops.

DIFFICULTY

The puzzles get more complicated as you progress, but it's more patience than skill.

ADVANCE OPINION

A great platform collect-em-up. It's might be no Mario Advance, but a great way to spend an afternoon nonetheless.

82
9/10



REVIEWER: MARTIN KITTS

CASPER

The world's friendliest ghost haunts Game Boy Advance – in the nicest possible way, of course

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Microids
- **PHONE**
01932 838 230
- **WEB**
www.microids.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Password
- **LINK-UP**
No
- **OUT**
November

"This unusual puzzler plays more like a close-up version of *Lemmings*."

Surprisingly, though this might look like an everyday platform game, this unusual puzzler plays more like a close-up version of *Lemmings*. It's certainly a departure from the norm and that can only be a good thing – surely. Your objective is to guide a zombified doctor through a haunted mansion in order to find a way to defeat a trio of considerably less friendly ghosts. The doctor lurches and stumbles towards various traps and obstacles, and you have to turn Casper into one of six different transformations to prevent the unfortunate chap from blundering to his doom. By putting on a scary face, you can terrify him into changing direction. By turning into a bridge, you can get him

Top Tip

Float around the level to check out upcoming hazards and look for items before allowing the doctor to stumble into something nasty



★ Good to see a puzzle stylee brought to what could easily have been yet another bashed-out shatformer license.



★ Truly terrifying, isn't it? Woooooowooooo! Friendly ghosts are a bit of a rubbish idea.

HAUNTED HAPPENINGS

LOOK N' FEEL

Large, smooth sprites give the game a distinctive appearance.

GAMEPLAY

Unusual, to say the least. But *Lemmings* had more variety than this.

LIFESPAN

The six levels might not last as long as you want them to.

DIFFICULTY

Ranges from very simple to head-scratching tricky.

ADVANCE OPINION

An enjoyable ghost romp with gameplay that belies its 'kiddie' subject matter. Are you in the market for a puzzler?

75%

ADVANCE





LEGO ISLAND 2



GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Lego Media
- **PHONE**
020 8600 7200
- **WEB**
www.legomedia.com
- **PRICE**
£30
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
October

"Everyone will enjoy this light hearted, comical adventure"

You thought that the world of Lego was just having fun building things, playing quietly with your models and hair that easily clips onto people's heads – well you're sorely mistaken. You see, this gentle world also has a dark side, a nasty villain called the Brickster. The cheeky plastic thief has gone and escaped from prison and nicked the Constructopedia, the book that helps construct all the buildings on Lego Island, so now there are no buildings and a master criminal on the loose! Someone had better stop him and save the Island! That someone is Pepper, a cheery little chap with a skateboard, whose task it is to re-construct the place and catch the Brickster, and although it may seem as simple as catching the culprit and getting the lost book before carting



★ Your guide through the game is Infomaniac. He'll help you out of any pickle you get into!



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT

Welcome to a place where you can build anything without seeking planning permission!

him off to jail, it isn't, because this is an adventure that's jammed full of surprises and neat little touches. Everywhere you turn, there's a new mini-task to complete in order to get to the bottom of the main objective, and there's always someone to nudge you in the right direction if you're stuck. There are a few minor niggles, like the fact that you can't walk anywhere in the world, you have to stick to the paths, but once you get over that, you should have hours of adventure-filled brick building joy. *Lego Island 2* may be designed for younger players, but everyone will enjoy playing this light hearted, comical adventure, although older hands will probably not be bowled over by what they see. This is young and a bit too easy, but fun all the same. ●

Top Tip

Stop and speak to everyone you see. Some people just talk rubbish, but others can provide some useful tidbits of information.



★ Pepper is armed with pizzas that he can throw at anyone that gets in his way! Dangerous yet nutritional.

CAN WE FIX IT?

LOOK 'N' FEEL

The Lego world is big and the graphics are nicely detailed too.

GAMEPLAY

Full of sub games and surprises to keep things interesting and fresh.

LIFESPAN

There's loads to see and do, and you can bet that you won't see it all first time around.

DIFFICULTY

A bit easy for older players, but youngsters should find this plenty of challenge.

ADVANCE OPINION

This is nothing outstanding, but it is a very solid and fun game that will win the hearts of ten-year-old Lego fans everywhere.

80



★ Vehicles like this handglider can be hard to control but enable you to access more remote areas.

REVIEWER: DAVE BRADLEY

PREHISTORIK MAN

If Mario met The Flintstones, this is the wacky day out they would have together. Probably...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Midway
- PHONE
020 7938 4488
- WEB
www.midway.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
Yes
- OUT
Now

Sam the caveman has appeared on both the SNES and Game Boy Color, and this GBA outing is a welcome return for the little yob. Armed with a wooden club and a loud voice (his jungle scream works like a smart bomb, killing anything within earshot) he has to hurdle his way through prehistory in search of nosh. It was all stolen from his village by dinosaurs. In the first five minutes it resembles just regular platform tosh, but you soon discover that there are enough tricks and traps to lift *Prehistorik Man* above the ordinary. The sprites are big and bold, and the whole thing exudes a winning cartoony charm. The obstacles are well designed – although it's frustratingly easy to get killed

Top Tip

Look out for secret caves underground that can be reached by bashing a hole with your club.



★ It's easy to lose health but if you kill any creature that's harmed you, he'll drop your life force back on the ground.



★ Sam is a psychopath who enjoys riding his unicycle into the sea while grinning like a loon.

– and ingenious use of equipment like hang-gliders and unicycles mean that many of the episodes have a genuinely amusing and original edge.

You're required to carefully ponder the oncoming foes. It's easy enough to smash them on the bounce and pick up the points, but wild animals can be leaped on to give you a springboard to higher platforms; giant tortoises can act as walking carriages across difficult terrain; and if you time your leap right, the back of an ascending spider can be an impromptu elevator.

It's easy to come a cropper and fall to your death, and password locations are few and far between, making your progress slow as you cover old ground. But practice makes perfect and rewards like secret locations make it worth persevering, proving that classic madcap nonsense can still entertain even in the 21st century. ●

"The sprites are big and bold and the whole thing exudes a winning charm"

MAN TO MAN

LOOK 'N' FEEL

The bright Jurassic theme really entertains.

GAMEPLAY

Standard platform action, with a few humorous surprises.

LIFESPAN

Plenty of variety and tricky levels to keep you coming back.

DIFFICULTY

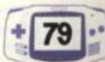
Hardcore platform fans will still find plenty to test them.

ADVANCE OPINION

Platform games are two-a-penny, but Sam has a few tricks up his Prehistorik sleeve.

83%

ADVANCE





★ Saving fairies is the name of the game. The more you rescue, the more the game opens up.

REVIEWER: TOM EAST

The cutest dragon in the history of the world is off saving fairies again. But don't let that put you off...

SPYRO

SEASON OF ICE

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Vivendi/Universal
- **PHONE**
0118 920 9100
- **WEB**
www.spyrothedragon.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
No
- **OUT**
November

Spyro has a problem. And we're not talking about the hordes of gnorcs who want to boot his little purple butt in. His problem is his appearance. His games may be ace, but he looks cuter than a week-old kitten – hardly up to the job of battling nasties...

But don't let his looks fool you! It's personality that counts. Well actually it's gameplay and the good news is that *Spyro: Season of Ice* plays as well as any other GBA platformer, including *Super Mario Advance*.

Everything that is in the old PSone games is recreated in full isometric effect on the mini-screen. Spyro glides around the gaff, flames baddies with his power breath and head butts glass pods to free the fairies who have been imprisoned by a mean old wizard. The stupid wizard cursed himself with a headache and now he needs the wings of 100 fairies to cure



★ They may look like bees – and their stings are just as nasty – but these gnorks don't die when they hit you.

him. Funny, two paracetamol and a good lie down always does the trick for us.

Although the storyline is a bit dodgy, the game isn't. In fact in many ways it's even better than the PSone games. Spyro looked pretty on PlayStation, but the levels were a bit empty and our little purple pal had few enemies standing in his way. But on GBA the lush levels are crawling with gnorks who'll often deck you before you can aim some of that famous flame breath at their faces. Okay, so it's hardly *Resident Evil*, but it makes saving these fairies a far more daunting task.

Saving fairies and knocking off gnorks isn't your only challenge, either. In the beach level, Spyro is ordered to flame the lighthouse's beacons to get them working. Then, in the first ice world, it gets even harder as you've got to ring some bells in sequence and catch a thief who has stolen Lucky's hat. Chasing this criminal is rock hard and if you don't throw down your GBA in disgust at your ham-fisted efforts at least five times then you deserve a medal.

If it's all too much for you, you can always leave the level and try your hand elsewhere. But then fairies are your reward for completing such tasks – and you need a certain amount of fairies to open up later levels. And believe us, it's worth the pain for one blast on the *Space Invaders*-style speedway level which has you flying into the screen blasting baddies before the time runs down. Brilliant!

Oh, and while you're completing all of the challenges, don't forget to collect the gems which are littered around the place. With these you can pay Moneybags who'll let you play in some class mini-games, the first of which has you playing as Sparx and shooting down some evil insects.

Spyro: Season of Ice is just as good – no, better, dammit – than the old PSone games, and with *Crash Bandicoot* also on the way, GBA has nabbed two of PlayStation's biggest platform stars. All our fave handheld needs now is *Ape Escape* and we'll be made up. ●



★ Watch out! This gnork is armed with a bat, so you'd better sneak up behind and flame him from a distance if you're to save yourself from getting clobbered.

Cor! What a beauty!

Although Spyro may look a little too cute for our liking, his old games were the best looking platformers on PlayStation. And *Season of Ice*'s graphics are right up there with *Mario Kart*

Advance, *Tony Hawk's* and *Doom*. Unlike those other GBA platform stars *Mario* and *Rayman*, this has got a fancy *Tony Hawk's*-style isometric view and it looks fantastic. But why is it called

Season of Ice when, as you can see, Spyro is saving fairies on the beach? There is a lava level too. Oh well, s'pose *Spyro: Season of Ice*, *Sun*, and *Erupting Volcanoes* isn't very snappy...



★ Quick! Butt the gnork before he turns around and beats you up.



★ Collect those gems. You'll need them to pay Moneybags.

Top Tip

Use Spyro's hop to get a bit of extra distance. If, when gliding, it looks like you're not going to make it to a platform, double-tap A and you'll hop up onto the ledge.



★ There's more variety in the levels than chocolates in a box of Quality Street. And they're just as scrummy.

"*Spyro: Season of Ice* is just as good – no, better, dammit – than the old PSone games"

WAY OF THE DRAGON

LOOK N' FEEL

Armed with a smart *Tony Hawk's*-style view, it's the best looking GBA platformer.

GAMEPLAY

There's loads to do and lots of variety on every level, so it doesn't 'drag on'. Geddit?

LIFESPAN

With 100 fairies to rescue, this will take a fair old while to finish.

DIFFICULTY

Catching the thief is rock hard – and that's only the second level.

ADVANCE OPINION

Who'd've thunk it? The adventures of this little dragon push Mario out of the way to claim the 'best GBA platformer' title.

89%



REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

MECH PLATOON

A real-time strategy game in the palm of your hand? A crazy idea, but it might just work...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
BBI
- PHONE
02380 653 377
- WEB
www.kemco-games.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
Yes

Another quiet little gem from Kemco, *Mech Platoon* is a surprisingly addictive and engrossing real-time strategy game, that takes its cue from the likes of *Command & Conquer* – and it all works a treat on the small screen.

First up, the game has a fully comprehensive tutorial mode, that *really* helps you get to grips with the astonishing intricacies of the game's basic operations, before throwing you in at the deep end.

It's pretty much as you'd expect for the most part. You send out your forces to mine raw materials, which can then be converted into buildings for your base or

Top Tip!

Raw materials are the basis of everything. Make sure you're constantly mining for more to fund your war effort.



★ If your Mechs get trounced in battle, you can salvage spare parts to recycle later in the game.



★ Once you've collected enough, you can start getting your base together – just don't forget to defend it wisely.

materials for you to create your army of lumbering Mechs. The more buildings you construct the more advanced your technology gets, which in turn allows you to get even better buildings and installations, and more importantly, allows you to upgrade your military hardware.

Once you've got the hang of that bit, and built yourself a decent fighting force, it's off to war with your new army to defeat your opponents – who have been busy doing exactly the same as you. The trick is clever management of your resources – striking a balance between defending your base, building an effective army and developing your technology.

Thankfully, it's not at all fiddly to play once you get your head round it, and with three warring factions to choose from – each with different combat styles – plus a fantastic four-player multiplayer mode, you'll be glued to this well into 2002. Definitely a must-have for strategy heads. ●

“With three factions to choose from, you'll be glued to this well into 2002”

MECH MADNESS

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Detailed units and tight controls bring RTS to the small screen. Very nice indeed.

GAMEPLAY

It's a slow-paced brain bender but very therapeutic. A joy to play.

LIFESPAN

Plenty to get your teeth into, you be experimenting for ages.

DIFFICULTY

Later campaigns are very tough indeed with some cunning enemies.

ADVANCE OPINION

Complicated without being too fiddly – with enough to do to make sure you won't stop playing for some time to come.

90 %



REVIEWER: DAVE FERRETT

BATMAN VENGEANCE

The Dark Knight is hungry for vengeance! But is he Caped Crusader or time waster?

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Ubisoft
- **PHONE**
01932 838 230
- **WEB**
www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Password
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November

"Enough to keep even the most nimble-fingered superhero playing into the night"

If you were a millionaire, you'd more than likely splash out the cash on a lovely holiday or four. You may also buy yourself a lovely new car, a spanking new mansion, or, if you were feeling particularly public spirited, you could even give some of the cash to charity. Now that would be a nice thing to do. But whatever you chose to do with the cash, it's doubtful that you'd slip on a rubber suit and vow to rid the city of naughty people. Still, it takes all sorts.

Yes, Bruce Wayne is back in a game based on the cartoon series, and this time he's packed his utility belt full of surprises. It starts off like any other platform effort – jumping

Top Tip

When weaving through traffic in the driving levels, press the R button to stun any other cars out of the way. Don't get too rocky, though – this doesn't work against the trucks.



★ More variety than a bag of Revels, there are flying levels, driving levels and plain old platform levels. This is top fun!



★ Loads of characters from the cartoon make an appearance, including ol' funnyface himself, The Joker.

around and beating up baddies is pretty much the order of the day. However, what makes *Batman: Vengeance* that little bit better than standard superhero platform fare is the fact that one minute you'll be leaping from platform to platform, punching and kicking your way to glory, and the next you'll be whizzing through the streets of Gotham in the Batmobile or taking to the skies in the Batcopter.

It really is great fun, and although none of the different sections of the game are perfect, they're challenging enough so that you don't complete each level the first time around, and addictive enough to keep you coming back for more.

Batman: Vengeance is a great little platformer. It has enough different elements in it to keep even the most nimble-fingered of superheroes playing way into the night. So, sit down, get Alfred to make you a nice cup of tea, and get playing, because this is excellent. ●

HOLY HEROES

LOOK N' FEEL

Some of the animation is great – check Batman's cape billowing in the breeze!

GAMEPLAY

A bit patchy in places, but different game styles help keep things fun and fresh.

LIFESPAN

Loads to do and see, this should keep you amused for quite some time.

DIFFICULTY

Tricky enough so you don't walk through it, but easy enough so you don't give up.

ADVANCE OPINION

Slicker than *The Penguin*, sexier, than *Catwoman*, and tougher than *The Riddler's* brainteasers. *Batman: Vengeance* is tops!

87%

ADVANCE

83



REVIEWER: DAVE PERRETT

LEGO BIONICLE TALES OF THE TOHUNGA

It seems that Lego is getting weirder and weirder. Plastic crab arms and duck feet anyone?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Lego Media
- PHONE
020 8600 7200
- WEB
www.legomedia.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Battery
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
Now

"Fun to play, and the adventure is big enough to keep you hooked for some time"

We have no idea what's going on here. After all, we're still coming to terms with being able to stick Lego women's hair on to bearded Lego men's heads, let alone these strange crab-duck-with-a-mask type things that are Lego Bionicle. Still, you don't really need to understand the little creatures in this game to enjoy it, though it does take a bit of getting into, and you're going to have to get your reading glasses out – these Bionicle folk have got a lot to say!

The story goes that a brave villager will one day bring peace, love and understanding to the island and the people that live there, by taking a stroll into the wilderness, finding the six Toa Stones, and combining them to unleash nice special powers.

It all seems so simple, and yet you can't help getting a bit lost in what's going on every now and then – as the brave

villager, you'll initially have to do plenty of wandering and talking before you actually get involved in any action. Still, when the action does start, this game is fun to play, and the adventure is big enough to keep you hooked for some time.

There's even the added bonus of special codes (found in the boxes of the Lego Bionicle toys). You tap these into the game to unlock a whole host of brand new and exciting features. This helps keep things interesting, though of course that does involve forking out more cash.

Lego Bionicle is a decent enough adventure game, and once you eventually get over the tedious walking/talking bit you will start to enjoy yourself, but we'd still rather play *Lego Island 2*.

Top Tip

When you're using the turtles as stepping-stones, be careful not to throw them too far, or you won't be able to reach them with your first jump.



★ Everyone that you talk to has loads to say. This guides you gently into the game, but it does get a little tiresome.



★ You can customise your character to look just how you want them to. This is Lego after all...

BLESS OUR BIONICLES

LOOK 'N' FEEL

The landscape's a bit sparse at times, but the characters look good enough.

GAMEPLAY

Takes a while to get into it, but there's plenty to do once you have.

LIFESPAN

With new features added via special codes, this has the potential to last a fair while.

DIFFICULTY

Not particularly taxing, especially as you're given advice at every turn.

ADVANCE OPINION

Bionicle is enjoyable and challenging, but it's hardly groundbreaking or outstanding. Fun but not essential.

72



★ It's the usual story: kidnapped girl needs rescuing by martial arts muscle-head... er, that'll be you, then.

REVIEWER: OLIVER HURLEY

FINAL FIGHT ONE

The arcade classic is back – only this time it fits in your pocket.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Ubi Soft
- **PHONE**
01932 838 230
- **WEB**
www.ubisoft.co.uk
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
Now



★ Once you make it to the end of each level, you'll be confronted with some pretty tough bosses.



★ Each character has their own attributes, though we reckon you're better off going for speed over strength.

"The endless parade of baddies means that the game has a genuinely frantic pace"

FIGHTIN' TALK

LOOK'N'FEEL

Plenty of tasty-looking backgrounds, plus the animation is smooth and speedy.

GAMEPLAY

Admittedly lacking in variety, but it's great fun and is incredibly engaging.

LIFESPAN

This is *Final Fight*'s main shortcoming – there's just not that much of it.

DIFFICULTY

There's no great art to mastering it, but its sheer accessibility is one of its plus points.

It's always gratifying to see the revival of a classic gaming genre. And while, in the arcades at least, side-scrolling beat-'em-ups have found themselves out of fashion in recent years, *Final Fight* is the sort of classic retro gaming that lends itself perfectly to being

crammed into a GBA cart.

The concept is simple. As is always the case with these sorts of games, your girlfriend has been kidnapped by a gang of hoodlums and is being held hostage on the *wrong* side of town. It's up to you to trawl through various slum-based levels, dispatching with endless hordes of no-good thugs along the way by means of the only language they understand: a swift kick in the head.

Tekken it most certainly isn't but, despite its somewhat simplistic approach, the endless parade of baddies means that the game has a genuinely frantic pace and once you've picked it up, you'll be loath to put it down again. A bit of variety is on offer by virtue of big, bad bosses at the end of each level and a selection of weapons and power-ups hidden in crates as you pummel your way through the mayhem. It even retains classic bonus stages such as having to destroy a car with your bare hands. Lovely.

Its main drawback is that it really won't last you very long at all and you'll find yourself at the end of the game before you know it. Luckily though, the quality of the gameplay is such that it's enough to outweigh these longevity issues and it's enough fun that you'll constantly find yourself coming back to it again for just one more go...

Top Tip

Tap R to unleash a super-powerful special attack, but don't use it too often as it also drains some of your own energy.

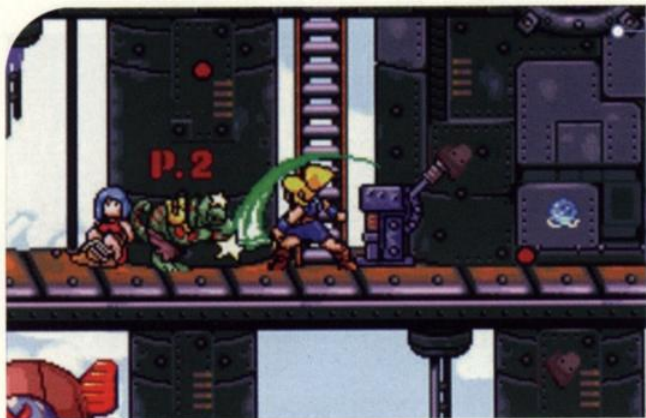
ADVANCE OPINION

Proof indeed that it is possible to do a decent beat-'em-up on a handheld, but it's a shame it doesn't last a little longer.

80%

ADVANCE

85



REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

LADY SIA

Leather, magic rings, mutant hordes and a sword-wielding vixen – Lady Sia shows Xena how it's done...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
TDK
- PHONE**
01462 456 780
- WEB**
www.tdk-mediactive.com
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Battery
- LINK-UP**
No

"The sheer quality and vibrancy of the excellent hand-drawn visuals makes playing it a pleasure"

Not the most anticipated game on the planet, it's true – *Lady Sia*, exactly? But it turns out that *Lady Sia* is quite a charmer. The story may be run-of-the-mill: imprisoned warrior princess must escape her vile captors and save the world from evil, but it's wrapped up in a slick platformer that is, for once, challenging, engrossing and great fun. Taking control of the sword-wielding vixen in question, you travel from village to village clearing them of evil minions with your multi-slash sword combo and your limited repertoire of magic moves. After every clutch of levels, you're then faced with a massive boss, who once eventually beaten allows you to progress to the next set of levels.

These platform adventures may be two a penny on GBA at the moment,

TopTip

Remember that Sia's sword combo edges her forward with each swing. If you do it too close to an abyss, you'll fall off!



★ If the mutants are giving you too much bother, Lady Sia's ring can summon some seriously powerful magic.



★ On occasion, you'll even get to ride Sia's trusty bird in some cool mid-level racing sections.

but don't let that put you off. While we'd never place too much importance on the standard of a game's visuals, they actually *do* make a real difference with *Lady Sia* and lift it head and shoulders above the crowd.

The sheer quality and vibrancy of the excellent hand-drawn style artwork makes playing it a pleasure, even in the poorest lighting conditions – something that *Castlevania's* designers would have done well to remember!

That's not to say, *Lady Sia* isn't without its faults. It can often be quite unfair, with some nasty enemy movement patterns that are sometimes unavoidable and therefore need to be meticulously memorised in order to progress – but then, if it's a challenge you're looking for, then you won't be disappointed. When a game looks as beautiful as this, such niggles are easily forgiven. ●

PRETTY LADY

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Stunning artwork and multi-layered parallax scrolling. Yummy.

GAMEPLAY

Standard hack 'n' slash platforming affair, much in the *Castlevania* vein.

LIFESPAN

A chunky 24 levels in total that you won't mind revisiting again.

DIFFICULTY

Some of the later levels get seriously difficult – often frustratingly so.

ADVANCE OPINION

Beautifully presented platforming action which, although flawed in some places, is definitely well worth a look. Nice.

80%



REVIEWER: ADAM WARING

INSPECTOR GADGET ADVANCE MISSION

Crap platformers, we wish they'd go, go away...

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
LSP
- **PHONE**
0238 065 3377
- **WEB**
www.lspcom.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Password
- **LINK-UP**
Yes
- **OUT**
November



★ Disguised as a penguin, Brian the dog can slip by enemies unnoticed...

Top Tip

Use Brian the dog for getting about, switching to other characters when need be. His double-jump makes him the quickest at getting through the game.



★ Jump on platforms, pick up goodies, kill the baddies. Even when you first pick it up, it feels like you've played before...

"If you're after a challenge, we can only advise you to go, go elsewhere!"

Oh no! The evil Dr Claw and his MAD organisation have gone and invented some diabolical machines to take over people's minds and send them stark raving bonkers. Or something. Sounds like a case for Inspector Gadget...

As every Gadget fan knows, the real brains of the operation are his niece, Penney, and her dog, Brian, and you'll need to take control of all three to play through the game. Only the Inspector can use the gadgets you occasionally stumble across, Penney can take control of robots and detonate them remotely with her computer book, while Brian has a handy double-jump, enabling him to reach the highest platforms.

There are oodles of coins scattered around, plus a load of other pick-ups. Dr Claw's henchmen are everywhere, but to kill them, you have to stop and attack 'em from close range. As some take several hits to kill, this can slow the gameplay to an agonising crawl in places. Smooth-flowing it ain't.

The levels are large and will take time to explore if you want to find all the pick-ups. Alternatively, you could just ignore them and head straight for the transmitter that you have to blow up at the end of each level, which takes considerably less time. Other than the occasional gadgets that pop up to help you on the way, such as heli-packs and anti-grav suits, there isn't an awful lot in the way of puzzles and the levels are quite straightforward.

It's a passable platformer, nothing more. Fans of the cartoon series will find some enjoyment, but there's little out of the ordinary. If you're after a challenge, we can only advise you to go, go elsewhere! ●

GOING, GOING, GONE

LOOK'N'FEEL

Nice animation of madcap gadgets that mirrors the cartoon series.

GAMEPLAY

Warning! Formulaic platform game alert! Been there, done that, ta very much.

LIFESPAN

The levels are large, but you can zip through them in no time...

DIFFICULTY

Remarkably unchallenging, especially if you ignore the pick-ups.

ADVANCE OPINION

While Inspector Gadget's first GBA outing isn't awful, it isn't exactly inspired, either. An extremely pedestrian platformer.

70 %



REVIEWER: GERAINT EVANS

DRIVEN

Basic visuals, old-school gaming flavour and a superb multi-player mode – what more could you ask for?

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER**
Bam!
- PHONE**
020 7428 7800
- WEB**
www.bam4fun.com
- PRICE**
£35
- SAVE**
Password
- LINK-UP**
Yes
- OUT**
November

"The handling's pretty basic, yet the racing action is consistently thrilling"

The basic isometric visuals may not be the most inspiring thing in the world, but in many ways this is actually quite refreshing, and for once it's a movie license that hasn't been squandered on a tedious load of rubbish. Which is nice.

Taking its cue from ageing classics like *Rock and Roll Racing* and *Super Sprint*, the handling's pretty basic, yet the racing action is consistently thrilling. This boils down to the fact that the opposition cars are nearly always pretty close by, so you really feel like you're battling through a pack of highly competitive rivals. When you couple this with *Driven*'s most innovative feature, this makes things all the more exciting...

And that feature is 'The Zone' – achieved when you reach a state of pure concentration. As you begin to race flawless laps, a meter builds up at the side of the screen. After a while your car starts to smoke, before bursting into a raging, flaming



★ **Story mode offers a genuinely challenging experience with objective-based gameplay and a great learning curve.**



★ **It reminds us of all those classic top-down racers from days gone by (sniff)...**

Top Tip

Practice makes perfect. Try the Time Trial mode to learn the courses, as you'll want to hit the high-speed zone early on.

comet that streaks around the course at high speed. Thing is, all the other cars on the track are doing exactly the same, so before you know it, the racing turns to utter insanity. This is even better in multi-player, especially if you're all 'in the zone' at the same time, as it makes for some superbly frantic action as you (quite literally) burn your way to the finish line.

Driven also offers a multitude of modes. Story mode is mission-based, and follows events and races from the film. Plus there's the excellent four-player mode and an addictive time trial. If you're still looking for another racer after *Mario Kart* and fancy something a little different from the abundance of 'into-the-screen' pseudo-3D affairs, then this may well be what you've been looking for. ●

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION?

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Basic isometric viewpoint, but who cares when you're having this much fun!

GAMEPLAY

Nostalgia fans rejoice – there are great elements from all your old favourites.

LIFESPAN

The involving missions are complemented by the solid multi-player mode.

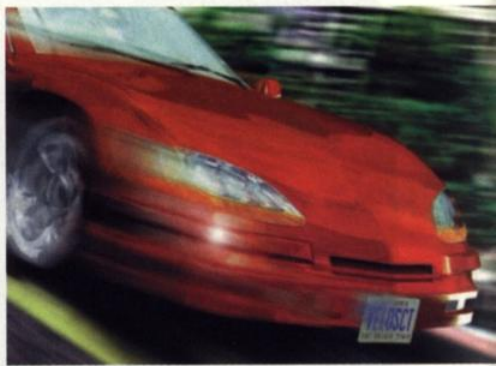
DIFFICULTY

Not the hardest game in the world, but you certainly won't master it overnight.

ADVANCE OPINION

A great alternative to some of the other racers, it's clear that a great deal of thought and effort has gone into making this.

83 out of 100



REVIEWER: JONATHAN DAVIES

CRUIS'N VELOCITY

Cruis'n Atrocity might've been more apt for this dreadful racer...

GAMEINFO

- PUBLISHER
Midway
- PHONE
020 7938 4488
- WEB
www.midway.com
- PRICE
£35
- SAVE
Password
- LINK-UP
No
- OUT
December

"As a game this is so dull it makes ditchwater taste like an exciting new flavour of Tango"



★ Crash into a wall or another car (by getting within a few feet of one) and you grind to a halt.



★ It's a visual feast but an aural spoonful of cod liver oil. And it's no great shakes in the gameplay department.

W hat do you want first, the good news or the bad news? Although, thinking about it, we won't be able to hear your answer 'cos we're in our office and you're probably reading this on the loo or somewhere. So if you want to start with the bad news, skip to the third paragraph.

Otherwise read on.

Right, the good news. If you're unimpressed by the flat, featureless tracks on offer in most GBA racers, rejoice. On the evidence of *Cruis'n Velocity* it appears that our pocket pal can do proper 3D tracks, with solid polygonal roadside scenery. It's not exactly *Ridge Racer*, but graphically this drags pocket gaming into the 21st Century. However...

The bad news: as a game this is so dull it makes ditchwater taste like an exciting new flavour of Tango. You drive along. Brrrrr. You steer left and right. Squeak. And every time you glance off one of the harsh, uncompromising walls that line 93 percent of the road, or you come within ten feet of another car, you get the same breaking-glass sound effect - CRSSSH - and slow down to a crawl.

And that's it. That's the whole game. Brrrrr. Squeak. CRSSSH. Brrrrr. CRSSSH. Brrrrr. CRSSSH. CRSSSH. CRSSSH. It's like Chinese water torture. CRSSSH. CRSSSH. CRSSSH. CRSSSH. CRSSSH. Aarrgh. How hard would it have been to have had a couple of alternative crash sound effects? BFFF, maybe. Or even DSSSH. But no.

A brave attempt at a proper 3D racer, sadly let down by the small matter of the game itself, which isn't much fun at all. ●

TopTip
The best advice we can offer is to leave this on the shelf and pick up another racer: *GT Advance*, *Mario Kart*. Anything...

CRUIS'N FOR A BRUIS'N

LOOK'N'FEEL

The 3D scenery is impressive, and the cars look okay. Sound is repetitive, though.

GAMEPLAY

Utterly tedious. Play this after *Mario Kart* and you'll weep like a baby.

LIFESPAN

The usual single-race or championship options are on offer. Ho hum.

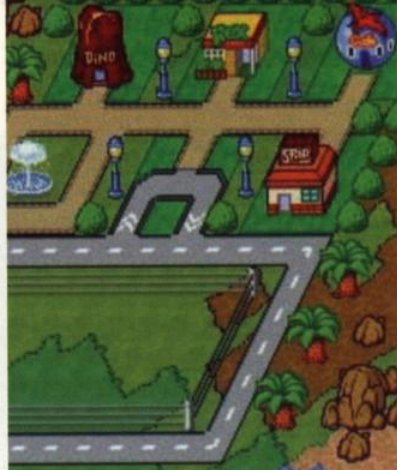
DIFFICULTY

No matter what you do you always seem to finish sixth. Then you cease to care.

ADVANCE OPINION

The solid scenery beats the flat look of other GBA racers, but this offers a fraction of the fun of *GT Advance* or *Mario Kart*.

38%



★ If you're expecting to see T-rexes rampaging through the burger stalls, forget it. Sorry.

REVIEWER: JONATHAN DAVIES

JURASSIC PARK III: PARK BUILDER

What do you get if you cross a dinosaur with a pig? Jurassic Pork.

GAMEINFO

- **PUBLISHER**
Konami
- **PHONE**
01895 853000
- **WEB**
www.konami-europe.com
- **PRICE**
£35
- **SAVE**
Battery
- **LINK-UP**
Yes

"The game follows the tried and tested Theme Park template"



★ A fairly ambitious title, but offering nothing really new. Plenty of stats though stat fans.



★ That'll be three eggs then. Prepare yourself for a fair amount of exactly this flavour excitement.

Here's your chance to be Dickie Attenborough and genetically engineer your own disaster waiting to happen. You start the game with a million quid, some samples of fly-infested amber and as much barbed wire as you can handle. All you've got to supply is the dodgy Scottish accent.

The game follows the tried 'n' tested Theme Park template. You scatter buildings around the map, join them up with paths, throw open the gates and wait for the punters to pour in. The twist is that you must also monitor your resident boffins as they excavate amber, extract fossilised DNA and grow it into drooling, roaring dino-attractions.

The manual is abrupt almost to the point of rudeness and there's no in-game tutorial, so your first couple of goes are likely to be spent floundering among the finer points of DNA sequencing and burger pricing. But with a bit of guesswork and luck it all starts to make sense, and Park Builder becomes as absorbing as these theme park type games invariably are.

The downside? The range of buildings available is decidedly limited, so all parks tend to end up looking the same. Ultimately, then, it's left to the Pokémonesque discovery and nurturing of dinosaurs to maintain one's interest. Just as well, then, that there are 140 different ones, and you can trade their DNA with your pals.

Shame you never get to see your cretaceous creations eating children or chasing jeeps, though. Och. Nae matter.

Top Tip

Make sure you have bus routes running past all your dinosaur pens. For some reason pedestrians on footpaths can't see through the fences.

JURASSIC LARKS

LOOK 'N' FEEL

Beautifully presented, aside from the brusque manual.

GAMEPLAY

Highly absorbing and crammed with dino-facts.

LIFESPAN

Hours of fun, as long as you don't get bored of DNA analysis.

DIFFICULTY

Tough at first but straightforward enough thereafter.

ADVANCE OPINION

A bit limited on the park-building and child-munching side of things, but niftily designed and tough to put down.

78

GAME ON!



Game Boy Advance + any 2 games +
Action Replay GBX + Gamester N-case

for **£149.99***

free Gamester N-case*

carrying case worth £7.99
with every Game Boy Advance*

WHATEVER TURNS YOU ON

Virgin

megastores

*While stocks last

OUT NOW!

The verdict on all those GBA games already in the shops.



PITFALL: THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP No

Another mediocre re-hash of this ancient platformer. The decent visuals and super-smooth animation does nothing to help the fact that this is ordinary.

70%



SUPER MARIO ADVANCE

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE On Cart ■ LINK-UP Yes

Not the all new Mario game that everyone was hoping for, but still a decent enough romp all the same. With the option to play as Peach or Toad and the chance to wangle whopping great turnups at enemies, this is an enjoyable little number that isn't quite up to the standard of *Wario Land 4*.

89%



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE On Cart ■ LINK-UP No

It might be one of the first games that came out for GBA, but this is still the best extreme sports title available. With some sweet visuals and loads of tricks and combos to learn, this is an essential buy.

91%



READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING ROUND 2

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP Yes

Wretched. Nasty visuals and excruciatingly shallow and dull gameplay makes this instantly forgettable. About as much fun as sucking on a sweaty boxing glove.

32%



KONAMI KRAZY RACERS

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE On Cart ■ LINK-UP Yes

Somewhat displaced by the arrival of the superb *Mario Kart Super Circuit*, this is still a decent cutesy racer, that just lacks the depth of it's newer rival. If you've already beaten *Mario Kart* a hundred times over and are looking for a new challenge, this could be worth checking out.

85%



BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

■ PRICE £35 ■ SAVE On Cart ■ LINK-UP Yes

The single player is actually pretty decent this time round, with some sweet RPG elements to keep things feeling fresh. As you'd expect though, the multi-player is where it's really at.

82%



RAYMAN ADVANCE

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE On Cart ■ LINK-UP No

Super to look at. The animation on Rayman is top notch and the environments are superbly drawn and crystal clear. It's just a shame that it plays like ever other platformer under the sun. Still, worth a look if you've finished the GBA's better platformers.

80%



F-ZERO: MAXIMUM VELOCITY

■ PRICE £35 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP Yes

More than just a recreation of the SNES classic, this takes Ninty's frantic futuristic racer a step further and is a lightning quick beauty of a game. If it hadn't been for *F-Zero*, there would have been no *Wipeout*.

89%



GT ADVANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP Yes

The first and best 'realistic' racer on the GBA. There are tons of tracks and new cars to unlock, with loads of performance altering options to tinker with. Takes a while to get going, but worth the effort.

87%



REVIEWS OUT NOW!

ADVANCE A to Z

REVIEWED THIS ISSUE...



TOP GEAR GT

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP Yes

This one stinks to be honest. Unlike *GT Advance*, this isn't even proper 3D so it plays a bit like a Game Boy Color title, only with slightly better looking graphics. Take our advice and look elsewhere for your racing thrills. This is rubbish.

34



SPIDERMAN MYSTERIOS MENACE

■ PRICE £35 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP No

For once a Marvel licence that hasn't been wasted. This really is fantastic stuff, offering tons of rock hard and beautifully designed levels and superb animation. Whether you're a spidey fan or not, buy it.

90



IRIDION 3D

■ PRICE £35 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP No

The 3D graphics are quite smart – making this look an absolute treat – it's just a shame that it plays like a dog. It's all so confusing that it winds up being a frustrating exercise in survival rather than an enjoyable shooter. If it weren't so hard it might have been pretty good, but it's not. So there.

68



KURU KURU KURURIN

■ PRICE £35 ■ SAVE On Cart ■ LINK-UP Yes

Another quirky ace for Nintendo. Guide a rotating stick around some devilishly tricky mazes without touching the sides. If you're looking for a puzzler with an action twist that'll have you glued to your screen for months then this is what you're after. Brilliant.

90



JURASSIC PARK III: DNA FACTOR

■ PRICE £35 ■ SAVE Password ■ LINK-UP No

EUCH! This is rotten to the core and a shameless cash in on a movie that wasn't much cop. If you enjoy playing shoddy games that feel like they've been developed by two chimps on a ZX81 then this is for you.

21



EARTHWORM JIM

■ PRICE £29 ■ SAVE None ■ LINK-UP No

We never saw the appeal of this the first time around, so quite why they expect us to buy it and play it again we don't know. Basically, it's exactly the same as its 16-bit cousins right down to the absence of saved games. Slightly dump then, equally dump now. We suggest you avoid.

60

ATLANTIS THE LOST EMPIRE	55%
BATMAN VENGEANCE	87%
BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT	82%
CASPER	75%
CHUCHU ROCKET	90%
CREATURES	80%
CRUIS'N VELOCITY	38%
DENKI BLOCKS	85%
DEXTER'S LAB	85%
DOOM	93%
DRIVEN	83%
EARTHWORM JIM	60%
ECKS VS SEVER	88%
ESPN FINAL ROUND GOLF 2002	65%
ESPN X GAMES SKATEBOARDING	60%
FINAL FIGHT ONE	80%
FORTRESS	64%
FROGGER'S ADVENTURES	78%
GRADIUS ADVANCE	37%
GT ADVANCE CHAMPIONSHIP	87%
HARRY POTTER AND THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE	85%
INSPECTOR GADGET ADVANCE MISSION	70%
INTERNATIONAL SUPERSTAR SOCCER	80%
IRIDION 3D	68%
JURASSIC PARK III: DNA FACTOR	21%
JURASSIC PARK III: PARK BUILDER	78%
KAO THE KANGAROO	40%
KONAMI KRAZY RACERS	85%
KURU KURU KURURIN	90%
LADY SIA	80%
LEGO BIONICLE	72%
LEGO ISLAND 2	80%
LEGO RACERS 2	76%
MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT	95%
MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX	79%
MECH PLATOON	90%
MEGAMAN BATTLE NETWORK	35%
MIDWAY'S GREATEST ARCADE HITS	78%
NAMCO MUSEUM	50%
NO RULES GET PHAT	35%
PAC-MAN COLLECTION	90%
PHALANX	80%
PITFALL: THE MAYAN ADVENTURE	70%
PLANET MONSTERS	78%
PREHISTORIC MAN	83%
RAMPAGE PUZZLE ATTACK	55%
RAYMAN ADVANCE	80%
READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING ROUND 2	32%
ROBOT WARS ADVANCED DESTRUCTION	80%
ROCKET POWER THE DREAM SCHEME	59%
RUGRATS: CASTLE CAPERS	60%
SPIDEMAN MYSTERIOS MENACE	90%
SPIRO SEASON OF ICE	89%
STEVEN GERRARD'S TOTAL SOCCER 2002	88%
SUPER BUST-A-MOVE	86%
SUPER DODGEBALL ADVANCE	85%
SUPER MARIO ADVANCE	89%
SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 X REVIVAL	73%
TANG TANG	45%
TETRIS WORLDS	56%
THE POWERPUFF GIRLS	62%
TOP GEAR GT	34%
WARO LAND 4	90%
WWF ROAD TO WRESTLEMANIA	64%

NO CHARGE
NINTENDO
AC-DC ADAPTER SET
PRICE: £20.00

Save your batteries for when you're on the move and use a straight adapter set when you're near a mains socket. This comes from the minty NinTy themselves, and when they've given you a system as great as GBA you can bet their peripherals will be top class too. It doesn't recharge your energy though, so it's better for those who tend to play at home most of the time.

★★★★★

I HAVEN'T THE POWER!
BLAZE
RECHARGEABLE
BATTERY PACK
PRICE: £9.99

With a relatively short recharge time, this is great because it promises you'll be able to recharge it 700 times! But it's let down by the fact that the battery will only play for four hours at a time. That won't even break you into a proper gaming session. A bit wimpy.

★★★★★

POWERED UP!

Power packs and chargers tested to destruction

Feeling a bit tired and run down, like you're running on low juice? You'll need to recharge your batteries then. While you're at it, do your GBA a favour too, with our guide to the best power nap remedies around.

WHITE BEAUTY
WILD THINGS
SUPER CHARGER PACK
PRICE: £9.99

This 2-in-1 pack contains a mains and in-car adapter for rechargeable batteries (also included), so offers great value for back seat Mario Kart drivers. It takes 4-5 hours to charge the batteries to their optimum, for which you're rewarded with 10 hours of play. Also, you can recharge as you play - for when you need power now, now, now!

★★★★★

POWER DRIVER
WILD THINGS
IN-CAR ADAPTER
PRICE: £7.99

If you're going on holiday with the family in your car you're going to need distractions apart from 50 rounds of I-Spy, so an in-car adapter is a must-have to keep in your motor. You can't use the recharger when the engine's running, so recharge when you stop for picnics, and play away as you travel to your next destination.

★★★★★

Get This!

SIR CHARGE
JOYTECH
BATTERY GRIP
PRICE: £12.99

A clear winner as it solves power problems while considering your comfort. Your batteryless GBA clips into the grip and lets you play on the fly and recharge when you're at home. If you've ever got finger cramps from reaching for GBA's incy wincy buttons, you'll find the grip lets your hands relax more - ingenious! Practical and oh-so comfortable, put this on your must-have list. Now!

★★★★★



ALSO AVAILABLE

THRUSTMASTER
WIN BATTERY

PRICE: £19.99
Clip in your GBA to get an enlarged, uncomfortable console. This and a good set of batteries will enable you to play all day without you or your energy source becoming fatigued.

★★★★★

WILD THINGS
RECHARGE STATION
PRICE: £14.99

A nice clear design in the iMac mould makes this an attractive and practical purchase. Lets you recharge your GBA as you would a mobile phone.

★★★★★

JOYTECH
RECHARGEABLE
BATTERY PACK
PRICE: £12.99

Does exactly what it says on the box. And offers over 10 hours of play when fully charged. Joytech are pretty reliable too.

★★★★★

LOGIC 3
RECHARGEABLE
BATTERY PACK
PRICE: £9.99

Another reliable product from another reliable company. Comes with batteries for you to power up.

★★★★★

JOYTECH
AC ADAPTER
PRICE: £7.99

A good, solid adapter in a nice purple colour to complement your GBA (if it's purple), but wouldn't a mains rechargeable battery be better so that you could play on the move too?

★★★★★



PROTECTIVE SHELL
LOGIC 3 SHOCK GUARD

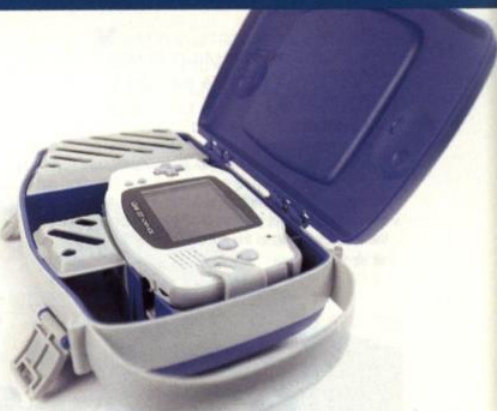
PRICE: £4.99
This device is more apt for the static GBA. Clip it on your Boy wonder and, should it get knocked off the edge of a table or corner of a chair, it's corners and edges will be protected by pieces of rubber to absorb shock. Don't say we didn't warn you...

★★★★★

LUNCH BOX
LOGIC 3 GBA ORGANISER

PRICE: £9.99
Bigger than Vanessa Feltz's lunchbox, it does provide snug homes for your games and cables, and it's easier than carrying a bundle of stuff in your arms. Problem is, it's designed to look like a giant GBA, which is altogether too garish for words. For a start, bigger looking doesn't mean better looking - it's horrid - and we'd prefer something a little more understated. Feels oh so plasticky too.

★★★★★



PORTABLE PROTECTION

Scratch-free GBA dreams come true

Your GBA is special. It's cute, powerful, boasts superb games, and loves to go out. But if you chuck it in a tat-filled bag - it's scratched screen central. Keep it tip top with sacrificial protector lambs.

ALSO AVAILABLE

LOGIC 3 FUN PACK
PRICE: £4.99
A separate hold-all for your cables and games. Isn't it better to get something that'll take your GBA too though?

★★★★★

SAITEK PLAYABLE PROTECTION CASE
PRICE: £19.99
Too big, difficult size, need a crowbar to open it, and ridiculously uncomfortable.

★★★★★

WILD THINGS GBA CARRY CASE
PRICE: £7.99

Padded fabric case to hold your big Boy. With a lack of nooks and crannies and just a velcro fastener, it could be securer.

★★★★★

WILD THINGS GBA LENS PROTECTOR
PRICE: £1.49

Very cheap sticker to put on your lens when it's not in use to save it from climate changes. Cut price and does the job - what more do you want?

★★★★★

WILD THINGS GBA COVER WITH CONTROLS
PRICE: £4.99

A plastic piece of protection for your screen that lets you play at the same time. Not something you've probably be crying out for.

★★★★★

CLING-ONS
WILD THINGS GBA PVC COVER

PRICE: £2.99

This won't save your console from harsh damage, but the thin plastic sleeve will help maintain its shiny, scratch and dust-free looks for longer. And, with holes in the cover to allow the buttons to poke through, it won't interfere with your handling.

★★★★★



Get This!

CASEY CASUM
LOGIC 3 PRO CASE

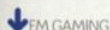
PRICE: £9.99

Ah, perfection's hard to come across in this category, but this silver cuboid padded case does the job. It looks good, it's a handy size for carrying on its own, and it won't take up too much room if you want to carry it in your day bag. Inside it's equipped with pockets for your games, velcro straps to keep your cables tidy, and a pocket to stop your console from getting scratched.

★★★★★



COOL KIT



SAITEK GBA RADIO

A really great piece of plastic that clips snugly and quietly onto your Vance and lets you tune into your favourite radio stations as you play. It picks up signals well, which is very important, and it looks nice with its nice-shade-of-purple coating. It does suck your GBA's batteries either, but then a radio needs even less power than your GBA does, so this matters little. Nilty.

★★★★★



JOYTECH STEREO EARPHONES

PRICE: £9.99

Sleek looking, light weight and with stereo sound, these earphones clip on your ear, so you don't have to wear a hair-raising headband, and they won't be collecting weeks' worth of ear wax. They'll also fit into other music devices for when you want a world of noise inside your head. But, by the same token, headphones from other devices will fit into your GBA.

★★★★★



LIGHT & SOUND

Enhance the gaming experience...

GBA uses relatively little battery power because the screen isn't back lit. Problem is, it's sometimes hard to see the screen as a result. Nothing that a good light won't fix though, and here's the best of the bunch. Oh, and if your folks keep hassling you to turn the sound down, you may want some headphones too, for a truly personal gaming experience.

ALSO AVAILABLE

WILD THINGS LIGHT MAGNIFIER

PRICE: £6.99

Similar to the Joytech one in that it's robust, well-designed, and performs game-enhancing tricks. It's just a bit more nobby and cumbersome.

★★★★★

LOGIC 3 LIGHT SHIELD

PRICE: £7.99

The flip-top lid protects your GBA screen from getting scratched and serves as a light - a dimmer light so that you can adjust it to suit your needs.

★★★★★

SAITEK ULTRABRIGHT LIGHT SYSTEM

PRICE: £9.99

Again, similar to the Joytech and Wild Things beauties, but without the magnifier. A glaring omission.

★★★★★

BLAZE ARCADE LIGHT MAGNIFIER

PRICE: £7.99

This also clips onto your GBA in the way the Joytech and Wild Things light magnifiers do, but the hinges are really stiff, so it feels like the plastic will snap. It's a few quid cheaper, but pay the little bit extra for quality.

★★★★★

WILD THINGS GBA FM RADIO

PRICE: £9.99

Made from clear plastic, this looks good but loses points when it comes to picking up and securing strong signals.

★★★★★



BLAZE FLEXILIGHT PLUS

PRICE: £9.99

Not just a white light - it's Super White (TM). This small bit of kit clips easily onto your Advance and floodlights the screen. It's cheap and small to store, but the screen suffers from a bad case of glare where the light hits it, which... er... means that instead of not being able to see the screen due to darkness, you can't see it due to brightness. Which doesn't solve the problem.

★★★★★



Get This!

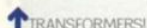


JOYTECH LIGHT MAGNIFIER

PRICE: £9.99

Very smart. This clips onto your GBA and has a protective hinged piece that lifts up to expose a strip light and a screen-covering magnifier. It lights up and embiggens your screen perfectly, without getting in the way. It also looks good, and feels robust and well made - not like it might snap as you try to open it. Really adds a dimension to your gaming.

★★★★★



LOGIC 3 ADVANCE LIGHT

PRICE: £12.99

This great bit of kit also comes with a screen magnifier and recharge station. It has two rods with lights on the end that you swivel round for a good angle. Rather than pointing directly at the screen, the lights point towards each other, illuminating the screen but eliminating glare. With good light and an enlarged screen, you're laughing. The lights can sometimes get in your fingers' way though...

★★★★★



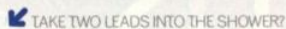
ADVANCE



IT'S A BAG! THRUSTMASTER MOVE 'N' PLAY GBA BAG

PRICE: £17.99
A sturdy and stylish over-the-shoulder bag with tons of room for your GBA and all its accessories. Instead of putting your GBA in your general hold-all, why not put your mobile, discman, etc in your GBA's bag?

★★★★★



WILD THINGS TWO-PLAYER LEAD

PRICE: £4.99

If most of the time you find yourself playing against one opponent, superfluous leads are just going to end up as a tangled mess, so this will suit your needs more. In a very considerate move, it's

also got a port that allows you to connect extra leads, so you're not just restricted to two-person play. Could be the most practical option for some.

★★★★★



GADGETS & GIZMOS

Essential clobber or utterly needless tat?

Customise your console to soup-up its performance. From essential leads for multi-player mallings to gadgets to make your Game Boy the grooviest, get your hands on these tat-like treats.

ALSO AVAILABLE

LOGIC 3 GBA FACE COVER

PRICE: £2.99

Just the one face cover in this pack. It snaps on in the same way as the others, but it's got a snazzier design.

★★★★★

WILD THINGS FOUR-PLAYER LEAD

PRICE: £7.99

Functional but with slightly less chunky-looking wires than the Joytech version. Slightly cheaper in price, but slightly cheaper-looking too.

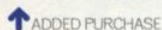
★★★★★

LOGIC 3 FOUR-PLAYER LINK CABLE

PRICE: £5.99

Logic 3 goods are generally of a good standard, and this is no exception. Could have made it slightly prettier though.

★★★★★



ADDED PURCHASE GECKO GRIPS

PRICE: £2.00

These look like those blue perforated plasters that cooks have to wear (hint hint). They stop thumb slippage and the rest if you put them in areas that are prone to get sweaty on your GBA. Kind of handy, but kind of stupid looking too.

★★★★★

→ SNAP HAPPY WILD THINGS SNAP-ON SKINS

PRICE: £6.99

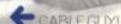
(FOR THREE)

Like snap-on mobile covers, these allow you to customise your Advance for a totally unique look. They come in a range of colours, and you get two per pack, so you need never have real-life beat-'em-ups over whose is whose again!

★★★★★



Get This!



CABLE GUY! JOYTECH FOUR-PLAYER LINK CABLE

PRICE: £4.99

For when you absolutely, positively have to beat every feather plucker with a GBA. Get three other gaming boys around and get yourselves linked-up and ready to do battle. Gaming doesn't get much better than this, and this cable will serve you well.

★★★★★

SUSSED! TIPS 'n' cheats

UNLOCK EXPERT MODE JURASSIC PARK III: DNA FACTOR

Beat the game once to unlock a tougher challenge — expert mode. To get it, load your winning file and start again.

BONUS LEVELS LADY SIA

If you get a Perfect rating on every level in a kingdom, you will unlock a special bonus level for that kingdom.



Here is the strapline
for this tips section hey
these are the best in the world!!!

SPECIAL INTEL, CLEAR DATA, UNLOCK COS...

ADVANCE WARS



ADVANCE CAMPAIGN

If you're already quite good at *Advance Wars* and you want an extra challenge, try starting an Advance Campaign. To get it, you need to first buy the 'Advance Campaign' under Battle Maps (this will become available after completing the Campaign Mode once). Once you have bought it (it only costs a buck), start a new Campaign while holding down the Select button. The words Advance Campaign will appear in the upper left corner, the AI will be tougher and some of the units in the will be stronger. For example, instead of regular tanks, you often face MD Tanks, your opponent has more units, and you less. But in return, you will get more cash.



CLEAR DATA

To erase all saved game data the easy way, turn on your Game Boy Advance and press and hold right, L and Select at the same time. Be careful not to accidentally delete your data.

SPECIAL INTEL

After you have finished the Field Training missions (and in the course opened up the War Room, Campaign, Design Maps and Stats features), go back into Field Training. A very short tutorial called Special Intel is now available that gives you extra gameplay tips.

UNLOCK NEW COS

Beating the regular campaign will unlock Olaf as a playable CO in Vs. and Link Mode, but you can also get some of the other COs as well. The only problem is that you have to pay for them and certain conditions have to be met to unlock them. Check the Battle Maps room after you beat the Campaign mode — and Hachi will offer COs for sale.

- Olaf:** Unlocked after beating Campaign Mode
- Grit:** Beat Campaign Mode and use Max in Mission 4. Buy from Hachi for 50 coins.
- Eagle:** Beat Campaign Mode and use Sami for missions 15, 16, 17, 18, then beat secret mission 22. Buy from Hachi for 50 coins.
- Kanbei:** Beat Campaign Mode. Buy from Hachi for 50 coins.
- Drake:** Beat Campaign Mode. Use Andy for missions 15, 16, 17, and 18. Buy from Hachi for 50 coins.
- Sonja:** Beat Campaign Mode. Beat Mission 9 in 8 days (or less), Mission 10 in 10 days, Mission 11 in 12 days, then beat the secret missions 12, 13, and 14. You can then buy Sonja from Hachi for 50 coins.
- Sturm:** Beat Campaign Mode and unlock all COs. You can then buy Sturm from Hachi.

LEVEL PASSWORDS

MEN IN BLACK: THE SERIES

Enter these codes at the password screen to begin at the corresponding level:

FCHTRMNS: Level 2 — Forest Landing site

HSDSHSBS: Level 3 — Alien Technology Lab

MXNMSNNG: Level 4 — Rocket Silo

THXBXSCK: Level 5 — MIB Safehouse

NNTNDWNY: Level 6 — Halloween in Manhattan

NFTMMDD: At the End

FIND THE SNES TRACKS

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT



Want some retro lovin'? Well all the SNES tracks can be found in Mario Kart Super Circuit — you've just got to be good to get them.

In all, there are 20 extra courses that can be unlocked. All five old Super Mario Kart cups (which take in Mushroom, Flower, Lightning, Star and Special). To unlock these

fantastic cups, you first need to complete each standard cup while earning gold medals. Then you just have to complete the same cups with 100 coins collected per cup. Got that? Right, well doing this will unlock the extra cups (Mushroom, Flower, Lightning, Star and Special) in the difficulty in which you were playing. If you want all the SNES cups in all difficulties, you'll need to repeat the process for each class. And then, finally, just tap 'T' or 'R' on the cup selection screen.



EXTRA CHARACTER

KONAMI KRAZY RACERS

To get the excellently-named Vic Viper, enter a competitive race on Moon Road. At the first long gap, boost to the right and you'll land on a platform with a blue diamond on it. Collect the blue diamond, finish the race and save the game. Vic Viper will now be available at the Character Selection screen.



LEMON SQUEEZY

KURU KURU KURURIN

If you want to play in 'easy mode', just press Select in the starting area of each level. This will shorten your stick and make the game a fair sight easier.



EXTRAS, EXTRAS

CHU CHU ROCKET

If you're looking for even more challenge from Sega's insanely tricky *Chu-Chu Rocket*, try this: beat all normal stages in puzzle mode. The result? You'll have unlocked all the hard puzzle mode levels! Complete all these and you'll uncover the special levels. Complete every last one of those and you'll have the mania levels to overcome. Don't ask what's after that...



★ Hawk's-a-lordy! Look, man! No blood.

CHEATS GALORE

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

Get to the main menu, or the in-game pause menu, and tap in the codes below. Get it right and your board's wheels will spin or the menu screen will just about to inform that the code did the business. While entering these codes, be sure to keep the right shoulder button held down, though. Otherwise, they won't work - and your mates won't be impressed in the slightest!

RESULT

Get rid of blood
Unlock Spiderman

Unlock all levels and get maximum money
Unlock all levels

Disco zoom

(only works when keyed in on in-game pause screen)

Set time to zero

(also only works on in-game pause screens)

'Happy' blood and sparks

(only works when entered at main menu)

Unlock all cheats

CODE

B, Left, Up, Down, Left, Start, and Start
Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A, and Start

B, A, Left, Down, B, Left, Up, B, Up, Left, and Left
A, Start, A, Right, Up, Up, Down, Down, Up, Up, and Down

Left, A, Start, A, Right, Start, Right, Up, and Start

Left, Up, Start, Up, and Right

Start, A, Down, B, A, Left, Left, A, and Down

B, A, Down, A, Start, Start, B, A, Right, B, Right, A, Up, and Left

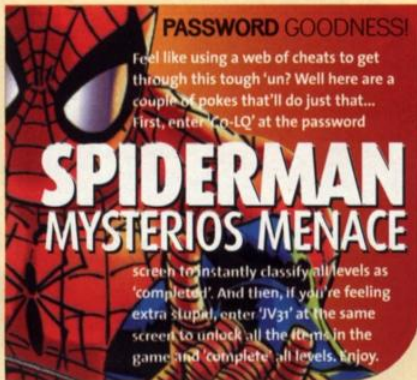


PASSWORD GOODNESS!

Feel like using a web of cheats to get through this tough 'un? Well here are a couple of pokes that'll do just that... First, enter 'CQ-LQ' at the password

SPIDERMAN MYSTERIOUS MENACE

screen to instantly classify all levels as 'completed'. And then, if you're feeling extra stupid, enter 'JV31' at the same screen to unlock all the items in the game and 'complete' all levels. Enjoy.



THIS, THAT AND THE OTHER



★ Alys, in her white top. Now would you rather be managed by her, or Gordon Strachan?

SUPER DODGEBALL ADVANCE

Think you're good enough to challenge the Dream Teams of the dodgeball world? Even realise they exist? No, well they do, and there are four of them initially. The Shooters, The Rockets, The Ironmen, and The Warriors are the Leeds, Liverpool, Arsenal and Man Utd of Dodgeball Advance. They are won by beating them each twice, after you've taken first place. Continue to be successful in Special Championship mode three more times to get three other Dream Teams. Win the Special Championship once more, and you'll get to challenge the almighty Atlas team.

Beat them and you've got the lot. And you've earned a nice rest!

On a different tack (ouch, who left that there?), you can also change your manager. Every time you start over and erase your saved data, your team manager will change in a random fashion. Just like the situation at barmy Southampton! There are four managers in the game: Sara (who wears a groovy yellow tank top), Alys (who wears white like Clint Boon), Jenny (who sports a Chelsea blue shirt) and Masumi. Nice, eh!

BEAR NECESSITIES

KONAMI KRAZY RACERS

To unlock the teddy bear character, head for Cyber Field 2 and enter a competitive race there. Collect the blue diamond that sits just before the finishing line, then go on to complete the race. Save your game, head to the character select screen.



UNLOCK BOSS

IRIDION 3D

To view an end-of-level boss, go to the Game Options screen and Start Level. Then highlight the Start at Boss option. Before you know it, you'll be battling the boss.



GOOD OLD FASHIONED CHEATING

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2X REVIVAL

If you're struggling to pull off those scare combos of your arcade-wasted youth, here's a little tip. While fighting in a single player battle, press Select. This'll let you pull off specials with easy movements. As Ryu, for instance, press forward and punch for the fireball, and the fireball move now does the dragon punch - everything's brought down a gear. This makes the game way easier to play and much more forgiving to old fogie players.

■ If you're a bit of a fashion freak and want to alternate fighters' costumes, just highlight anyone at the character selection screen, and press A plus B. Nice threads.

■ If you want to unlock Gouki, just tally up more than 5000 points. And if you want to play as Shin Gouki you'll be needing 9999 points...

■ Any secret gameplay modes, you ask? Well, do well in single player mode (ie, complete it and complete it thoroughly) and you'll gradually unlock secret modes that include Survival and Time Attack.

■ And finally, complete the game under a skill setting of eight without using any continues. Press R at the main menu and you'll be able to view some stupendous character art in the Louvre-beating in-game gallery.



★ Even you, you decrepit old thing, will be able to pull off moves such as this when you get a-cheatin'.

DO THE LEVEL WARP... AGAIN

W1	1-1	1-2	1-3
W2	2-1	2-2	2-3
W3	3-1	3-2	3-3
W4	4-1	4-2	4-3
W5	5-1	5-2	5-3
W6	6-1	6-2	6-3
W7	7-1	7-2	

★ Get it right and you'll be hopping all over this screen

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE

Want to jump all over the place like some mad Italian plumber character? Well here's how to do it...



To warp to world 4: First, get to stage 1-3 - shouldn't be too difficult. Then, after you get the potion, go all the way to the right until you reach a vase. Use the potion, and head down the vase. Normally you'd be unable to go down this vase, but you'll now be warped to level 4-1. Handy, eh?

To warp to world 5: Get to level 3-1, head to the waterfall, and proceed to drop down. Keep on until you reach the hill, then enter the door on the hillside. Dig up vegetables like some manic farmer fellow until you get a potion. Head right and place the potion next to the vase. Jump into the vase and you'll be warped to the world 5.

To warp to world 6: At the start of level 4-2, jump down gracefully and land on the big whale, then go to the left. You'll find some red grassy areas and here you'll be able to get your hands on a potion. Carry the potion through the entire stage, but instead of going through the final door, jump on the last whale's back. Then leap over a small gap and you'll find a vase. Drop the potion, go through the door and down the vase. Voila!

To warp to world 7: Head to level 5-3 as Luigi. Climb the first ladder, and then power jump up on to the platform that's usually inaccessible. Pull up the veg on the right-hand side of the warp vase. Chuck the potion bottle on the floor and go through the door. In the dark world, jump down into the vase. You should see the screen shake and you'll find yourself in world 7.



★ Make sure you take Luigi to level 5-3, as he's the only one lanky enough to succeed

HIDDEN GO-KARTS

ADVANCE GT CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

This mini Gran Turismo has some tasty extras, not least of which is a hidden go-karting mode. Beat all classes of Championship to win a go-kart. The main menu will then display an Extra mode, which is in fact a karting doobie.



OPEN ALL

F-ZERO: MAXIMUM VELOCITY

On the password screen, enter B, L, B, A, R, B, B, A, and A to open all the tracks. Or enter A, B, L, A, A, R, and B for faster cars.

ODDS AND ENDS

PITFALL THE MAYAN ADVENTURE

First things first, this 'master code' will allow you to cheat in all sorts of underhanded ways, and simply needs entering at the title screen: L, Select, A, Select, R, A, L, and Select. Done that? Right, now you can have fun with these...

Just press L or R to cycle through all the levels. Then tap Left to highlight the 'Start' option, select it, and into the desired level you go. This is a great way to see the whole world without too much tedious wandering.

Once you've entered any level using the master code, hold Select and tap B. You'll now have 99 of each weapon at your disposal. Quite handy when there are so many darned baddies around.

Independent of the master code, you could also try these tap-in cheats...

If you keep on tapping Start at the continue screen, you'll end up with a healthy nine continues. Just like cats have in real life. Well... they do, don't they?

And finally, if you'd just like to skip to the Lakamul Rain Forest level, enter this at the title screen: A, L, A, R, A, L, Select, Select, and Start.

FUNKY CODES

READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING ROUND 2

More passwords, more comedy punches. Enter these dollar-filled codes at the password screen:

BOXER

Afro Thunder
Angel "Raging" Rivera
Jet "Iron" Chin
Joey T.
Johnny "Bad" Blood
Lulu Valentine
Mama Tua
Michael Jackson
Robox Rese 4
Rumble Man
Shaq

PASSWORD

\$KBBNGG\$C37G
\$8DNNGG\$C7JB
\$WF7PGG\$C779
\$2KFWGG\$C7Y2
\$KHJPGG\$C30X
\$WWNVGG\$C3KJ
\$8GZTGG\$C76J
\$MNXVGG\$C37Z
\$4JPWGG\$C779
\$6LNZGG\$W7G7
\$HMBNGG\$C36J

CHEAT: BEAT THE BOSS

Don't you just hate dying? Yes it is quite annoying, but fear not. Simply tap Up, Down, Right, Left, and Start at the continue screen when you're all out of lives and continues. You'll suddenly find a new lease of life and be able to carry on playing from where you left off.



RAYMAN ADVANCE

If you want to make your life go that bit further, pause the game and key in L, Down, Left, Up, Down, and R. This will replenish your life meter. Be careful, though! One false move - in this case a tap of the A button - and you'll accidentally quit the game.

For more benefits, enter the codes listed below when the game is paused:

BENEFIT

Invincibility
99 lives
Level select
All powers
All items

CODE

Right, Up, Right, Left, Right, and R.
Left, Right, Down, Right, Left, and R.
Up, Left, Right, Down, Right, and L.
Down, Left, Right, Left, Up, and L.
R, Up, Left, Right, Left, and L.



★ Do all your tapping at this, the beautiful main title screen...



★ ...then enter any which level you like! It really is that simple.



GET KING KONAMI KRAZY RACERS

To get the King character, enter a competition race at Sky Bridge 2. Get the blue bell and use it to make a blind jump to the right at the first large gap. You should land on a distant platform. Get the blue diamond, finish the race, and save.

F1 ACTION ADVANCE GT CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

For hidden Formula 1 mode, complete the Championship mode in all four classes in first place. You'll get an F1 car, and an Extra 2 option will appear.

ADVANCE CHALLENGE

There's nothing quite like bettering yourself. And with that in mind we've put together a whole slew of challenges for you to determine just how good/bad you really are. Tick in the Completed? Columns to keep a record of how well you're doing. Go for gold!

CHALLENGE 1: KART OF GOLD

MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT

For each of these challenges, you can select any racer and go for it in a 150cc kart. Coin collection isn't important, so go for pure speed and racing line to max out your times. Racing in Time Trial mode, there's only you and the elements, so make the most of the wide circuits. Try to cut everything very close, but make sure you don't venture off the tarmac...

CIRCUIT	RACE TIME	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
Peach Circuit	Sub 0'50"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 0'55"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'05"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mario Circuit	Sub 1'02"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'05"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'10"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>
Luigi Circuit	Sub 1'20"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'25"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'30"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rainbow Road	Sub 0'55"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'00"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 1'10"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>



CHALLENGE 3: STICK AROUND KURU KURU KURURIN

Head to the aptly named Challenge Mode and go for gold. To give you a little bit of slack, we won't make you get all golds to get a gold. If you see what we mean. Instead, just try to rack up as much bullion as you can. Each stage needs completing as quickly as possible. The only difference between a bronze and a gold is speed of movement. Practice each stage a few times, get a good line, play it cool, and go for it.

CHALLENGE	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
At least 45 golds out of 50	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least 40 golds out of 50	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
At least 35 golds out of 50	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>



CHALLENGE 2 TRUCKIN' HECK

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2

A simple challenge, this one. Just go for maximum points and maximum style. To the max! Baby. Obviously, you'll need to pull some hairy combos, so get plenty of practice tricking before you attempt to achieve the scores set below. It's important to choose a good boarder and board, too, one that you're comfortable with. Now get your skate on and head to these sick destinations:

LEVEL	SCORE	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
Marseilles, France	1.6 million plus	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1.3 million plus	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1 million plus	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>
New York City, USA	2.5 million plus	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2 million plus	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	1.5 million plus	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>

And no cheating!



CHALLENGE 4: FLOATER

F-ZERO MAXIMUM VELOCITY

More white knuckle TT action for you here. As any F-Zero veteran will know, the whole game lies in the corners. Straights are relatively easy, but get the corners wrong and you'll be crashing and burning before you can say "maximum velocity". The key is to slide around bends without letting the accelerator ease up too long. Other than that, just keep your nerve and you'll be well away. Any craft, no cheats... go, go, go!

TRACK	TIME	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
Bianca City:	Sub 2'00"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 2'10"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 2'15"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cloud Carpet	Sub 2'10"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 2'15"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sub 2'25"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>

PASSWORDS

F-ZERO: MAXIMUM VELOCITY

At the machine selection screen in Grand Prix mode, tap L, R, Start, R, L, and Select. You'll now have unmasked the password screen.



BALLOON BONANZA BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

In arcade mode, there's an easy way to get 40 balloons. Start on the side that has most balloons. Lay a bomb and stand next to it.



CHALLENGE 5: IT'S A MEEEEE!

SUPER MARIO ADVANCE

Super Mario Bros. 2 was a right little blighter, so it stands to reason that Super Mario Advance is every bit as tricky. What you've got to do here is amass as great a number of coins as you can throughout the entirety of the game. You can see how many you've collected as a percentage on the stage completion screen, and these are the targets you should aim for:

CHALLENGE	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
90% collection of coins	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
75% collection of coins	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
60% collection of coins	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>



CHALLENGE 6: BLESS

CHU-CHU ROCKET

An early Dreamcast-to-GBA port, Chu-Chu Rocket is still one of the best Game Boy Advance games out there. If you somehow managed to exhaust all that the game's got to offer (which must surely be impossible) or if you just want to show off, head to stage A1 in Puzzle mode. This is the first and easiest puzzle, but the challenge is to complete it as quick as you can. This calls for nippy digits more than anything else. Get your plan together, then go for it at full pelt.

TIME	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
Sub 10 seconds	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sub 15 seconds	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sub 20 seconds	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHALLENGE 7: SUBARU GURU

GT ADVANCE CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

It's Gran Turismo in your pocket! Well, not quite, but it's sort of close. The challenge here is to take a standard Subaru Impreza to the Hornet circuit and thrash the life out of it. Not literally, but you will need to be nippy quick. Go for a spin in Time Attack mode and do all you can to get your speed up and your time down. You can really slide the Impreza around these easy corners, so swing the back out at each bend to maximise your velocity. And don't forget to put your seatbelt on.

TIME	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
Sub 1'15"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sub 1'22"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sub 1'29"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>



CHALLENGE 8: CATCH 'EM ALL

TOP GEAR GT CHAMPIONSHIP

Standard car, Suzuka, default settings, sunny weather – the challenge is to win the race after giving your competitors a massive head-start. Sit on the starting grid for as long as you dare, and then claw your way back into pole.

HEAD-START GIVEN	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
Upwards of 0'30"00	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upwards of 0'20"00	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
Upwards of 0'10"00	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHALLENGE 9: AROOOOGA!

SUPER STREET FIGHTER 2 X REVIVAL



Like all Street Fighter games, this one's a tough cookie. But it'll crumble if you're good enough. And you'll have to be good, because first up you'll need to unlock Survival mode (for hints on how to do this see this month's Tips section). Now pick the fighter you're most comfortable with and head for the ring. The challenge is to lose as few individual rounds as humanly possible and to complete the mode at the same time.

ROUNDS LOST	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
0-1	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
2-3	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
4-5	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHALLENGE 10: KABOOM!

BOMBERMAN TOURNAMENT

Enter the classic Hi-Power stage with three computer opponents and switch their difficulty to maximum. Now go at it for as long as you can. As soon as you're blown-up, yep as soon as you lose a single life, it's Game Over. The challenge is to win as many rounds as you can, in a row, on the treacherous Hi-Power stage, without suffering any damage. Keep your wits about and play it safe.

ROUNDS LASTED	PERFORMANCE	COMPLETED?
20+	GOLD	<input type="checkbox"/>
15+	SILVER	<input type="checkbox"/>
10+	BRONZE	<input type="checkbox"/>

SO... HOW DID YOU DO?

- CHALLENGE 1 ☐
- CHALLENGE 2 ☐
- CHALLENGE 3 ☐
- CHALLENGE 4 ☐
- CHALLENGE 5 ☐
- CHALLENGE 6 ☐
- CHALLENGE 7 ☐
- CHALLENGE 8 ☐
- CHALLENGE 9 ☐
- CHALLENGE 10 ☐

Ticked all 10? Don't believe ya! But more than seven and you're a gaming God!!



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A - 01

A Bug's Life
A. Powers: Undergrnd. Lair
Action Man
Addams Family
Afterburst
Aladdin
Aliens: Thanatos Encounter
Alleyway
Alone in the Dark 4
Antz Racing
Army Men Air Combat
Azure Dreams

B - 02

B. Simpsons E. Camp Dead
Batman: Chaos in Gotham
Battle Tanx
Blade
Blue Pokemon
Bomberman
Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Bugs Bunny Crazy Castle 4
Bugs Bunny Op. Carrot Pat.
Burger Time in Bedrock
Buzz Lightyear

C - 03

Camelot (Quest for)
Cannon Fodder
Chicken Run
Crazy Castle 4

D - 04

Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX
Deja Vu
Disney's Atlantis
Donald Duck: Quack Attack
Donkey Kong
Donkey Kong Country
Donkey Kong Land
Donkey Kong Land 3
Dragon Ball Z
Dragon Warrior Monsters
Duke Nukem

F - 06

F1 Race
Final Fantasy 3
Force 21

G - 07

Game and Watch Gallery 2
Game Boy Camera
Gauntlet 2

Godzilla
Gold Pokemon
Grand Theft Auto
Gremlins 2

H - 08

Harvest Moon
Harvest Moon 2
Hercules

J - 10

James Bond 007
Jelly Boy
Jurassic Park

K - 11

Kirby's Dream Land
Kirby's Pinball Land
Kirby's Tilt 'N' Tumble

L - 12

Legend of Zelda: Ages
Legend of Zelda: Seasons
Links Awakening (Zelda)
Lucky Luke

M - 13

Mario Golf
Mario Tennis
Mario Land
Mario Land 2
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
Men in Black
Metal Gear Solid
Mortal Kombat 2

O - 15

Operation C

P - 16

Pac In Time
Perfect Dark
Pocket Bomberman
Pocohontas
Pokemon (All Colours)
Pokemon Pinball
Pokemon Puzzle Challenge
Pokemon Trading Card
Popeye 2
Portal Runner
Power Puff Girls
Power Rangers: Time Force

Q - 17

Quest for Camelot
Rainbow Six
Rayman

Red Pokemon
Road Champs Stunt Biking
Robin Hood
Robot Wars: Metal Mayhem
Roswell Conspiracies
Rugrats
Rugrats in Paris
Rugrats: Time Travellers

S - 19

San Francisco Rush 2049
Scooby Doo: Creep Capers
Shadowgate
Silver Pokemon
Simpsons: T'house Horror
Spiderman
Sponge Bob Square Pants
Star Trek: Beyond Nexus
Star Wars: Obi Wan's Adv.
Street Fighter: Alpha
Super Mario Bros DX
Super Mario Land 1 & 2

T - 20

Tarzan
Tasmanian Devil: M. Mad.
Tetris DX
The Legend of Zelda
Thunderbirds
Tom and Jerry
Tomb Raider
Tony Hawk's 2
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater
Turok
Turok 2: Seeds of Evil
Turok: Shadow of Oblivion

W - 23

Wario Land 2 & 3
WDL Thunderblanks
WWF Betrayal

X - 24

X Men Wolverine's Rage

Y - 25

Yellow Pokemon
Yoda Stories

Z - 26

Zelda
Zelda: Links Awakening DX
Zelda: Oracle of Ages
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
Zen: Intergalactic Ninja

GAMEBOY ADVANCE

Advance Wars
Army Men Advance
Atlantis - The Lost Empire
Back Track
Bomberman Tournament
Boxing Fever
Breath of Fire
Castlevania
Chu Chu Rocket
David Beckham Soccer
Doom
Earthworm Jim
Ecks vs Sever
ESPN Final Round Golf '02
F-14 Tomcat
Final Fight One
Fire Pro Wrestling A
F-Zero: Maximum Velocity
GT Advance Championship
Harry Potter
Int. Superstar Soccer
Int. Karate Advance
Iridion 3-D
Jackie Chan Advents.
Jurassic Park 3: DNA Factor
Konami Krazy Racers
Kuru Kuru Kururin
Mario Kart Super Circuit
Mat Hoffman BMX
Men In Black: The Series
Metal Gear Solid
Monsters Inc
Moto GP
NFL Blitz 2002
Pac Man Collection
Pitfall: The Mayan Adv.
Planet of The Apes
Power Rangers: Time Force
Rayman Advance
Ready 2 Rumble Boxing 2
Rugrats: Castle Capers
Spiderman: Mystero's Men.
Spongebob Squarepants
Spyro the Dragon
Street Fighter 2 Revival
Super Dodgeball Advance
Super Mario Advance
Tetris Worlds
Thunderbirds
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2&3
Wario Land 4
WWF Road to Wrestlemania



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CUT OUT & KEEP
ADVANCE
GUIDE

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**EVERY
TRACK
MAPPED!**



MARIO KART SUPER CIRCUIT™

**EVERY CORNER OF EVERY TRACK
WITH EVERY CHARACTER SOLVED!**

How To...



BE THE BEST AT MARIO KART

Packing eight karters and forty tracks into a cart the size of a Quaver, *Mario Kart Super Circuit* is a miracle of modern engineering. It's also crammed with all manner of tricks, short cuts and secrets. Like these, for example...



★ Always cross the finishing line in style. Not so much a tip, but more a way of life...

UNLOCKING STUFF

SPECIAL CUP

To access the Special Cup, take gold in the first four cups. More precisely, to unlock the 150cc Special Cup you'll need to get four gold cups in 150cc mode, and ditto the 50 and 100cc Special Cups. Simple as that.

SNES TRACKS

To unlock the extra *Super Mario Kart* based tracks for each cup, get at least an A rating by the end of the four normal tracks. Ratings appear to be based on a complex formula involving the number of coins you collect, your finish positions, the number of try agains you use and your lap times. The extra cups can be accessed with the L and R buttons on the cup select screen.

ALTERNATIVE TITLE SCREEN

Complete all cups in all classes to change the background on the title screen from blue to red. Well worth it we're sure you'll agree.

WIPING THE GAME

If you fancy doing everything again from scratch, you can wipe your saved data off the cart by holding L, R, B and Start as you switch on your GBA.

CHOOSING CHARACTERS

As the manual explains, karters are divided into three classes: lightweight, midleweight and heavyweight. Each have their pros and cons. Lightweight characters are quick off the mark and aren't

hindered too much if you go off-road, but they're relatively slow flat out and get barged around by heavier characters. Heavyweights are the opposite: they're slow to accelerate but have a high top speed, and are easily slowed off road but barge through the pack with ease. Middleweights are somewhere in between. Which you choose is largely down to personal preference, but you may find it wise to begin with a light- or middleweight character and then graduate to a heavyweight as your powers grow.

STILL CAN'T DECIDE?

On the character select screen you can check out how each character will perform in the heat of battle. Pressing L, for example, will make them fire off a shell, and R will do a jump. Select will blow their horn, so to speak. (Select works during races too.)



CHOOSE A CHARACTER



★ Careful selection of your character can make or break your overall performance. Choose wisely.

SUPER CIRCUIT

RACE-WINNING TIPS

TURBO START

Get the best possible start by pressing and holding the accelerator about halfway between the second and third lights coming on. Too early and nothing'll happen; too late and you'll spin the wheels; but get the timing spot on and you'll get a boost off the line.

QUICK RECOVERY

You can use a similar technique to the turbo start when you're being lifted back onto the track by Latiku. Press the accelerator a little while before he deposits you on the tarmac for a faster restart.

POWERSLIDING

This is the fastest way to take corners. Keep the accelerator down, turn into the corners and, with the accelerator and the D-pad pressed, press and hold R. Your karter will hop and then start to slide. If you hold the slide for long enough without colliding with anything or going off road, when you finally release R you'll get a mini-boost. Powersliding is only really possible on long, wide hairpins, but try it wherever you can for the best lap times.

SKIMMING

You can skim across short stretches of deep water by firing a mushroom and then hopping just as you leave the shore.

QUICK POWER-UP

After you've run over a power-up square, there's no need to wait three or four seconds for your

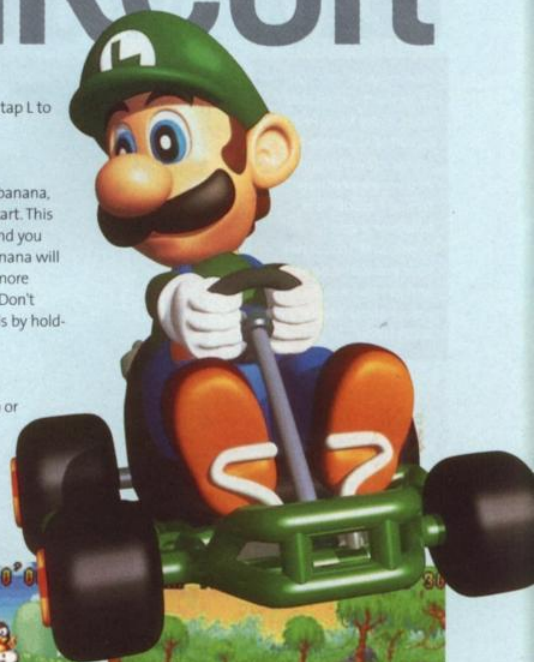
GBA to choose a power-up for you. Just tap L to select one immediately.

WEAPONS TIPS

If you've picked up a single shell or a banana, press and hold L to trail it behind your kart. This has two benefits. First, if someone behind you fires a shell at you, your own shell or banana will act as a shield. And second, it'll launch more quickly when the time comes to use it. Don't forget that you can fire shells backwards by holding Down as you launch them.

DISASTER AVOIDANCE

If you run over a banana, puddle, crab or anything else that would normally make you spin out, quickly tap B. If you do it fast enough your karter will whistle with relief and calamity will have been averted.



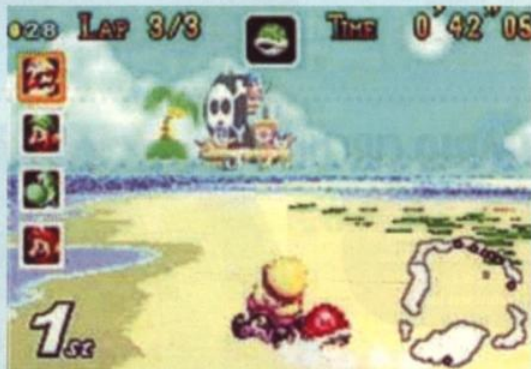
★ For a turbo start, floor the accelerator between the second and third light.



★ Driven into a spin? Quickly tap B to take them sting out of it and get back to business.



★ For a turbo recovery when being deposited back on track, press the accelerator just before Latiku drops you down. The timing takes practice.



★ Protect your rear by holding L when you get a power-up. This'll both deflect any incoming shell and release quicker when the time comes to fire.



MUSHROOM CUP

IT'S PEACHY

PEACH CIRCUIT

Don't expect any startling short-cut-related revelations here. Peach Circuit is as simple as it looks: a few straights and wiggles entirely free of hazards. It is, however, a good opportunity to master your powersliding skills, and get some coins in to unlock those lovely SNES tracks.

ICON-KEY

- START/FINISH
- JUMPS
- RAMPS
- BARRIERS
- COINS
- POWER-UPS



➔ 1

Here's a prime powersliding spot. Tap R, steer hard left, hold your nerve all the way through the bend, and then keep steering left a bit after you've released R to make sure you don't slide wide. A handy boost should be yours.

➔ 2

See if you can pick up this whole line of coins in one go. If you want.

MARIO CIRCUIT 1

Guaranteed to strike terror into the heart of any tips writer, Mario Circuit is a virtually featureless loop.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



➔ 1

If you're mushroomed up you can zoom across the gravel here and grab the power-up.

SURF'S UP

SHY GUY BEACH



1

Don't be too scared of those scuttling crustaceans. Swerve between them where possible, and if you do hit one just tap the B-button to avert a spin.

Ostensibly a tropical island paradise, Shy Guy Beach is, in fact, riddled with every shoreline paddler's worst nightmare: crabs. But steel your nerve, put the A-button to the metal and let the pebbles fly, because this is one of the most straightforward tracks in the game.

2

Wondering where all the coins are hiding? You'll find them on this easily missed treasure island, lurking off to the left. It's best to use a mushroom if you've got one to reach it, because the shallow water will slow you down. And watch out for the crab.



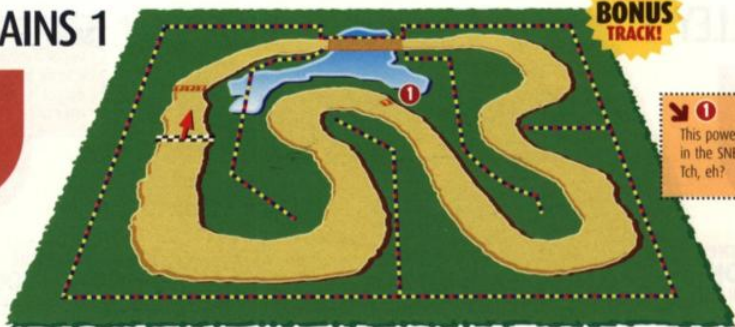
DONUT PLAINS 1

A wibbly, wobbly track with no particular features of note. It's great for powersliding, though.

SNES
BONUS
TRACK!

1

This power-up wasn't in the SNES version. Tch, eh?



ADVANCE

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MUSHROOM CUP

CONTINUED...

WATER PALAVER

RIVERSIDE PARK

Now we're motoring. Riverside Park is a veritable jungle trek, and has a couple of top-drawer shortcuts. One's a real finger-taxer, but you'll whoop with joy the first time you succeed. Or shout "Get in there", or whatever it is people do these days.

2

This one's a lot easier. Just look for the lighter-coloured strip of shallow water.

1

A narrow stretch of water, a broken bridge, some conveniently placed tiles... It all points to one thing. This shortcut's tricky but it does work, so stick with it. You'll need to loose off a mushroom on the bridge and then hop at the end.

ICON KEY

- START/FINISH
- JUMPS
- RAMPS
- BARRIERS
- COINS
- POWER-UPS

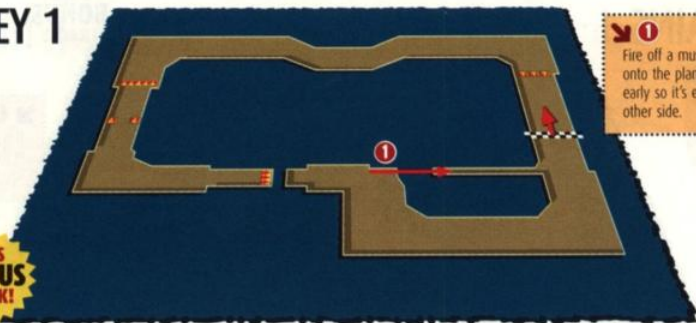


GHOST VALLEY 1

As the SNES version's feather power-up has been left out, Ghost Valley 1's short cut is doubly tricky. But it's still possible.

1

Fire off a mushroom and jump onto the plank. Fire the mushroom early so it's easier to brake on the other side.



**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**

CASTLE CAPERS

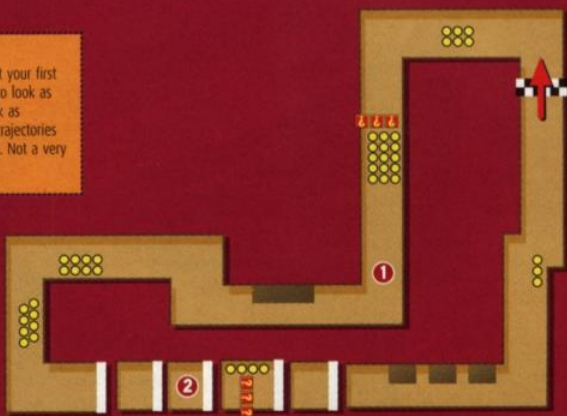
BOWSER CASTLE 1

If you don't already hate Bowser – and what right-thinking Nintendo fan wouldn't – then you will after visiting a couple of his castles. They're the trickiest tracks on the cart, with an irksome combination of uncompromising walls, boiling lava and Thwomps.



1

Here's where you'll meet your first Thwomps. The secret is to look as far ahead down the track as possible, calculate their trajectories and take avoiding action. Not a very good secret, admittedly.



2

Lava Bubbles are harder to avoid. Just close your eyes and hope for the best.

BOWSER CASTLE 1

There are no Thwomps in this particular castle, which is a relief, but there's no shortcut action to be had either. Erk!

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



ADVANCE

111



FLOWER CUP

IT'S-A ME!

MARIO CIRCUIT

In previous *Mario Karts*, Mario Circuit was the greatest test of a player's skill, with contenders the world over battling to shave hundredths of a second of each others' times, and fiendishly difficult one-in-a-million short cuts that took months of patience to perfect. The GBA version's no exception – it's a real test of driving skill – but short-cut-wise there's the really obvious bit by the finish line and, er, that's it.

➤ 1

Every bend on Mario Circuit is powersliding heaven, but none more so than the main hairpin.

➤ 2

This has to be the least secret short cut in the history of sneaky, but we'll mention it anyway in case you think we haven't noticed it or something. As you approach the finish line, slip off down the pit lane, grab all the coins and hit the boost pad to shave a couple of femtoseconds off your lap time.

ICON KEY



START/FINISH



JUMPS



RAMPS



BARRIERS



COINS



POWER-UPS



MARIO CIRCUIT 2

Plenty of taxing corners on this one, plus a mildly exciting jump, so that's good.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



➤ 1

If you're time-trialling it's best to use your mushrooms to slice straight through this chicane across the gravel.

BOO HOO

BOO LAKE



A particularly frightening track, this, and not just because of the ghosts. Put a wheel wrong and you'll plunge into inky nothingness.

2

If you've got a mushroom, and you're in a hurry, use it to leap clean over the hole rather than swerving round it. Veer left a bit in mid-air to align yourself for the next bend.

1

This bridge is almost impossible to see, being almost as dark as the background, but it is there...

4

Blindingly obviously, head across the rickety railway bridge to save a second or two.

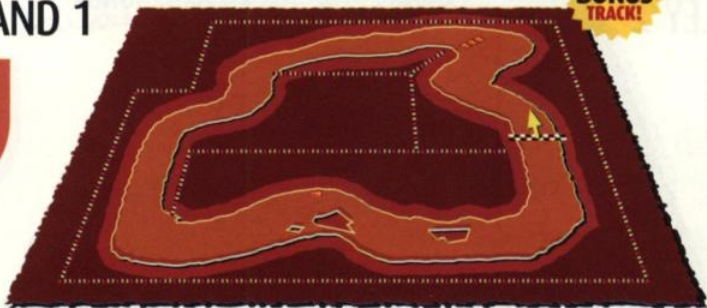
3

Boos, found on the long straights, seem to stay out of the way for the most part, but have been known to latch onto you and slow you down.

CHOCO ISLAND 1

Right. Erm. Well, this one's very brown with some muddy bits that'll slow you down slightly. Does that help?

SNES
BONUS
TRACK!



ADVANCE

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FLOWER CUP

CONTINUED...

SO CHEESY

CHEESE LAKE

It's impossible not to love Cheese Lake, with its squeaky music and whiskery inhabitants. It can, however, become incredibly confusing if you start getting barged about while tackling the two jumps across the track. It's all too easy to find yourself going round in circles.

1

As you take to the air for the second time, steer left and aim for the bouncy white square. You'll be able to rejoin the track further down than you would've if you'd ploughed blindly onwards.

ICON KEY

START/FINISH

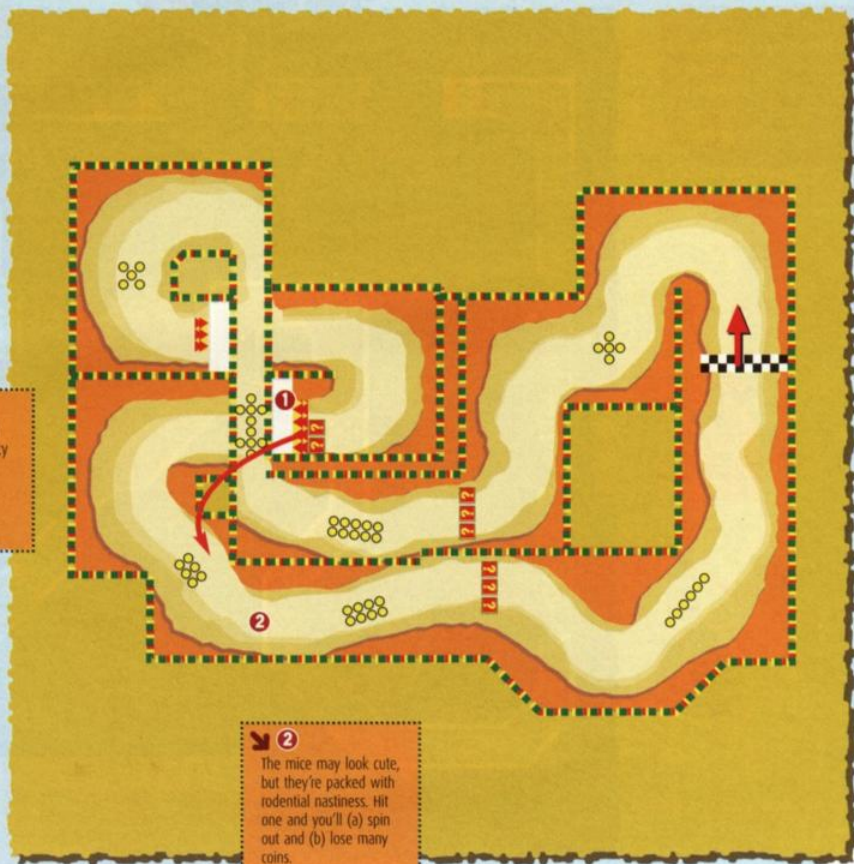
JUMPS

RAMPS

BARRIERS

COINS

POWER-UPS



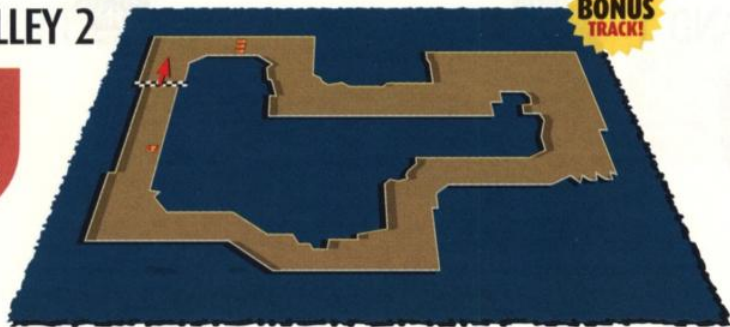
2

The mice may look cute, but they're packed with rodential nastiness. Hit one and you'll (a) spin out and (b) lose many coins.

GHOST VALLEY 2

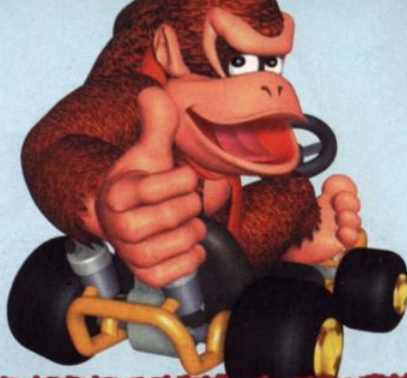
We're not quite sure in what sense this is a 'valley', either. And, in this stripped-down form, it hasn't even got ghosts in

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**

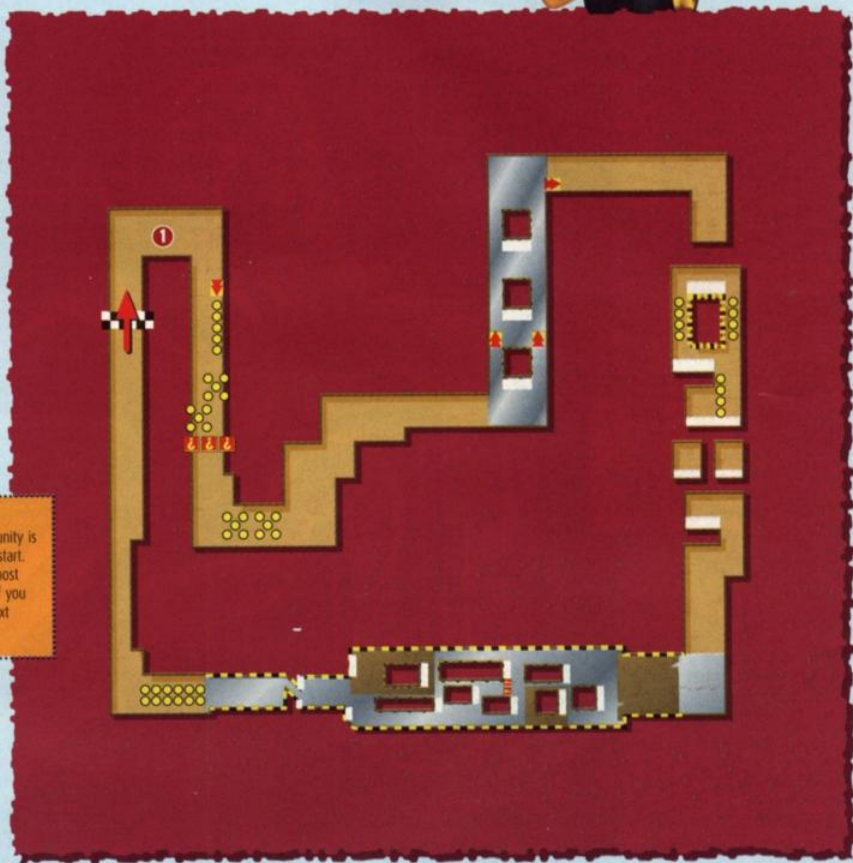


BOW WOW

BOWSER CASTLE 2



Bowser doesn't like to make guests in his castle feel welcome. As well as taking the lava lamp concept one step too far, his Thwomps just won't stay off the furniture. And there are no fresh towels. At least this particular castle has a few opportunities for powersliding, but watch you don't overshoot and find yourself sampling the big fella's volcanic homebrew.



1

The best powersliding opportunity is at this hairpin right after the start. Do it right and you'll get a boost down the next straight. See if you can pull one off round the next corner, too.

DONUT PLAINS 2

Alleluia! A short cut! Or, at least, not a short cut exactly, but a prime opportunity for a bit of mushroom-based lap time pruning.



SNES
BONUS
TRACK!

1

Use a mushroom to skim across the water here. How deep dare you go?



LIGHTNING CUP

OH BROTHER!

LUIGI CIRCUIT

Although it's a bit wet and miserable, Luigi Circuit is the ideal place to practise your powersliding technique. You should be able to pull one off on pretty much every corner. And remember: if you hit a puddle and start to spin out, don't panic – just tap B to snap your rear end back into line.

1

There's a block missing from the wall just before this hairpin. Nip through it to get ahead of the pack as you approach the final corner.

ICON KEY

START/FINISH

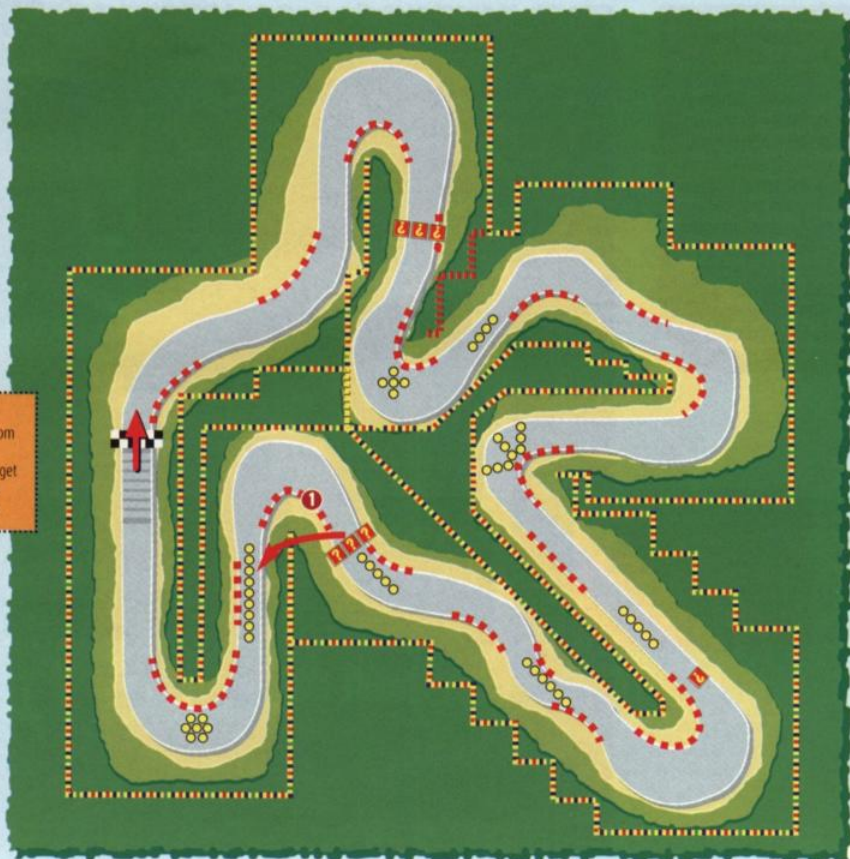
JUMPS

RAMPS

BARRIERS

COINS

POWER-UPS



BOWSER CASTLE 2

With the Thwomps removed, Bowser Castle 2 is a bit like a muzzled Rottweiler. Only not as smelly.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



1

This is the vestigial remnant of a feather-based short cut in Super Mario Kart. Even using a mushroom you just seem to fall into the lava.

SKY HIGH

SKY GARDEN



Not for the vertiginous, this one's set high in the sky among the vine tops. But it's a reasonably forgiving circuit with room for powerslides and several nifty short cuts.

2

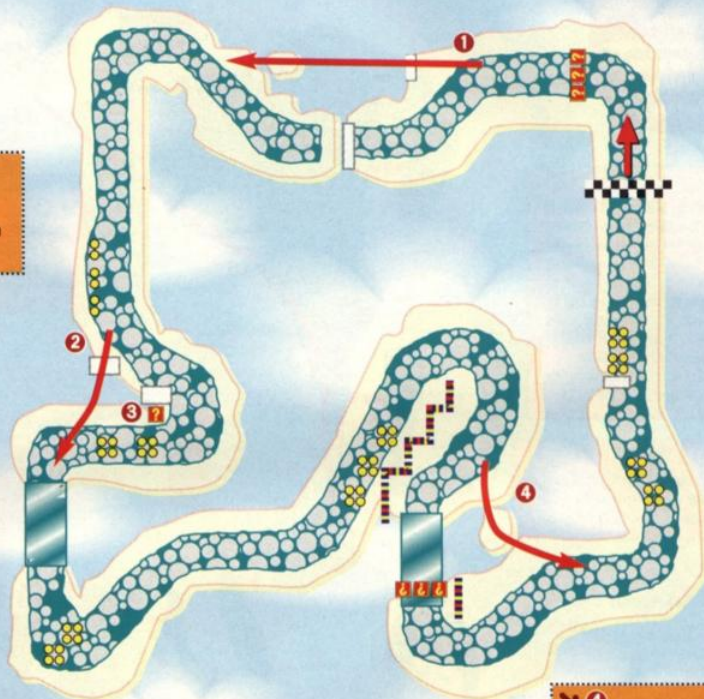
You can slice off the whole of this end if you've got a mushroom handy.

3

Use the bouncy ramp to cut the corner - and grab the floating power-up.

1

Got a mushroom? Then rather than turning left here, plough straight on, hit the mushroom and head for the bouncy ramp. Be ready to hop as you touch down on the cloud on the other side.



4

There's a cracking short-cut near the finish with no mushroom required. Just hop onto the cloud and hop off again on the other side.

MARIO CIRCUIT 3

It's like Mario Circuits 1 and 2 - only different. And there's a genuine, bona fide short cut.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



1

Diving through the hole in the wall doesn't seem to save any time in normal race trim, but with mushroom assistance it's a winner.

ADVANCE

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LIGHTNING CUP

CONTINUED...

CHIRPY CHIRPY

CHEEP CHEEP ISLAND

The name presumably refer to the chickens that inhabit this beach-side track. Run over both of them and laugh as they flap off in terror. Ha! Ha! Ha! HAAA! HAAAA! Like that.

2 This shortcut's so tricky that it's scarcely worthwhile. But for completion's sake, peel off to the left after you've crossed the second bridge, fire off a mushroom, jump as you hit the water and head for the wall opposite. There's a gap that's just big enough to pass through; miss it and you'll sink. If you make it, head round the beach and use another mushroom/hop combo to nip round the end of the wall and rejoin the track.

3 Here's an easy shortcut if you've got a spare mushroom. Just fire it off and aim for the bouncy ramp.

ICON KEY

- START/FINISH
- JUMPS
- RAMPS
- BARRIERS
- COINS
- POWER-UPS

1 The crabs work like puddles - tap 8 after hitting one and you'll be OK.

4 This boost pad's probably too fiddly to bother with.

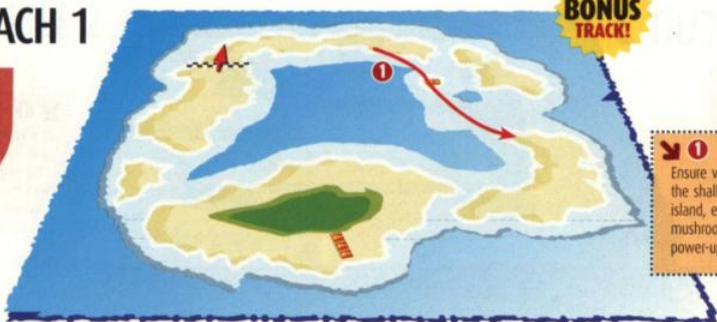


KOOPA BEACH 1

With the fish gone, Koopa Beach 1 is a doddle of a track where it's virtually impossible to lose.

SNES BONUS TRACK!

1 Ensure victory by veering through the shallow water and across this island, even if you haven't got a mushroom. There's even a power-up in the bargain.



FUN IN THE SUN

SUNSET WILDS

Yee-haw! Swap that ocarina for a banjo and ride off into the sunset. But – son of a Goomba – what's this? Those pesky Shy Guys have erected their tepees right in the middle of the track.



1
To take advantage of these boost pads you'll need to hop over the ramps that are hidden in front of them.

2
Aim for the rightmost of the first two boosts and then the one on the left at the end, rather than following one of the lines of stepping stones.

3
If you can hit all the boost pads here, great. But hit a tepee and wham! Or, if you'd rather, wigwam! (I'd rather not. – Ed)

4
Eagle-eyed karters will spot a jump pad against the wall just before the hairpin. Aim for it to lop off the corner.



CHOCO ISLAND 2

Oh happy day! Another shortcut! And this one's staring you in the face before the race has even begun.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



1
Drive straight forwards from the starting line and through this gap in the wall. Better with a mushroom.

ADVANCE

119



STAR CUP

SNOW JOKE

SNOW LAND

Filled with festive cheer, Snow Land echoes to the sound of sleigh bells. But it's a slippery little critter, powerslides frequently ending with your cart embedded in a snowman.

➔ **3**
The bouncy penguins suggest Shigsy had a hand in this one.

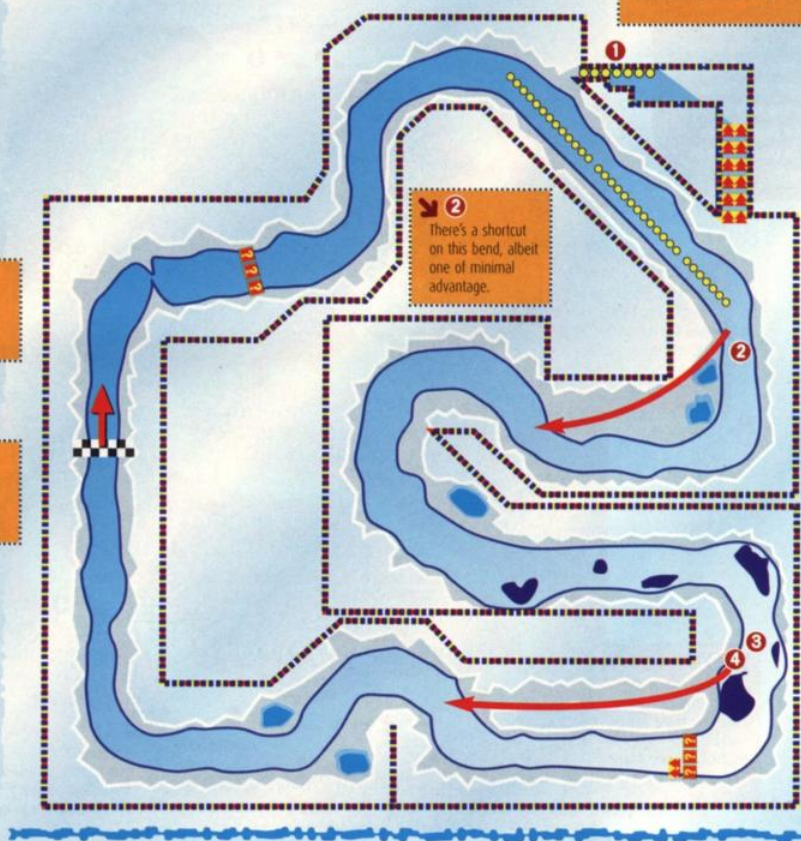
➔ **4**
Small gains may be made by sneaking across the ice here.

ICON KEY

- START/FINISH
- JUMPS
- RAMPS
- BARRIERS
- COINS
- POWER-UPS

➔ **1**
Slip through the gap in the wall to find a diversion, offering seven coins and some handy boost pads.

➔ **2**
There's a shortcut on this bend, albeit one of minimal advantage.



**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**

VANILLA LAKE 1

Tricky mid-track ice blocks hinder your progress here. Once hit they disappear for good, though, so try to aim for the gaps next time around.



GIFT WRAPPED

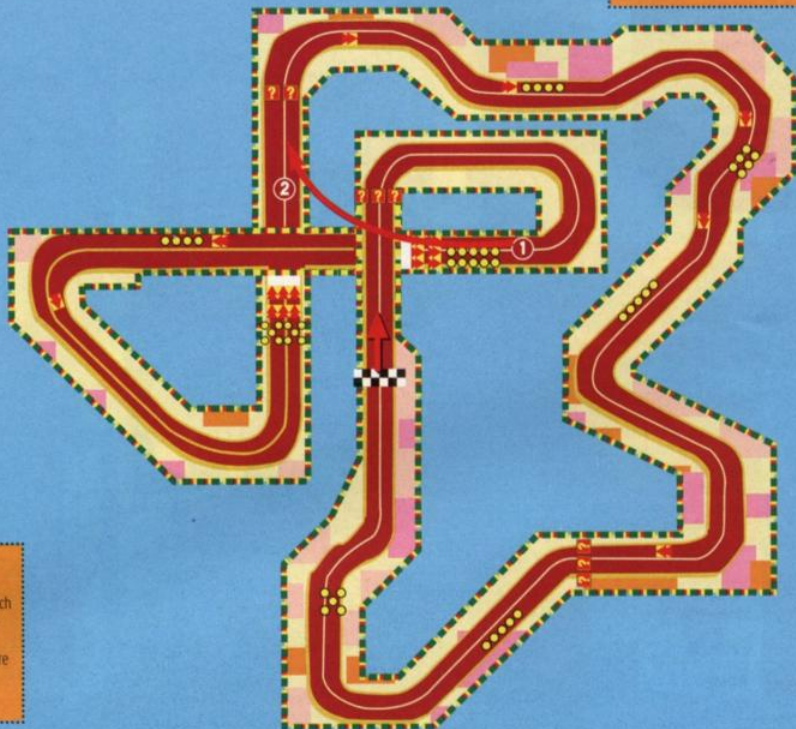
RIBBON ROAD

It's a gift, this one. But only in the sense that the scenery consists of attractively wrapped presents. In all other senses it's a bit of a toughie – a series of fast straights and high-G turns.



1

As you reach the first jump across the track, hit both sets of boost pads in turn and then steer right through ninety degrees as you take off. You'll slice off a tasty chunk of track.



2

If you decide to take the two jumps in the normal fashion, watch out as you land after the second. There's a series of bump strips, including a biggie down the centre of the road, and it's easy to get tossed off the road.

BOWSER CASTLE 3

Another of Bowser's abodes stripped of its Thwomps and Lava Bubbles and therefore of little consequence.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



1

Be sure to take the centre route in order to grab the power-up.

ADVANCE

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STAR CUP

CONTINUED...

SUCKED IN

YOSHI DESERT

Your problem here's going to be Piranha Plants, which make straying off road a nervy business. But if you memorise their whereabouts and avoid their sandy lairs you'll find a couple of opportunities for off-road corner-cutting.

1
It seems safe enough to slice off this corner, with a resulting minuscule reduction in your lap time.

2
Here's where you'll encounter the first of the Piranha Plants. Stick to the straight and narrow, and give other karts a wide berth in case they bump you to your doom.

3
Here's the handiest short cut. Aim to the left of the oasis, at the point where it meets the wall, and before you hit the water activate a mushroom - the Fungus of Champignons.

ICON KEY

START/FINISH

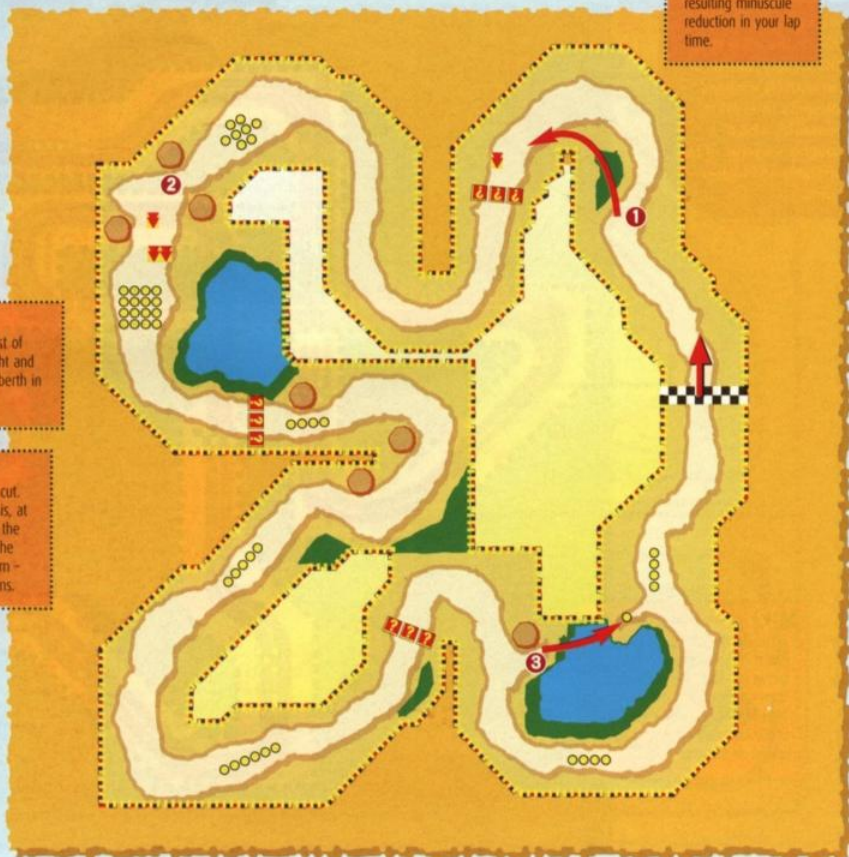
JUMPS

RAMPS

BARRIERS

COINS

POWER UPS



MARIO CIRCUIT 4

A powerslider's paradise, this. Taking every bend in optimal fashion is essential if you're not to fall behind the pack.

1
There's a gap in this wall, but reaching it involves crossing so much sand that it's only viable with a mushroom.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



LAVA ALERT

BOWSER CASTLE 3



Another Bowser circuit, another sorry saga of harsh walls, uncompromising lava and annoying Thwomps. Your every powerslide seems to end in a fruitless collision, and there isn't a shortcut to be seen.

1

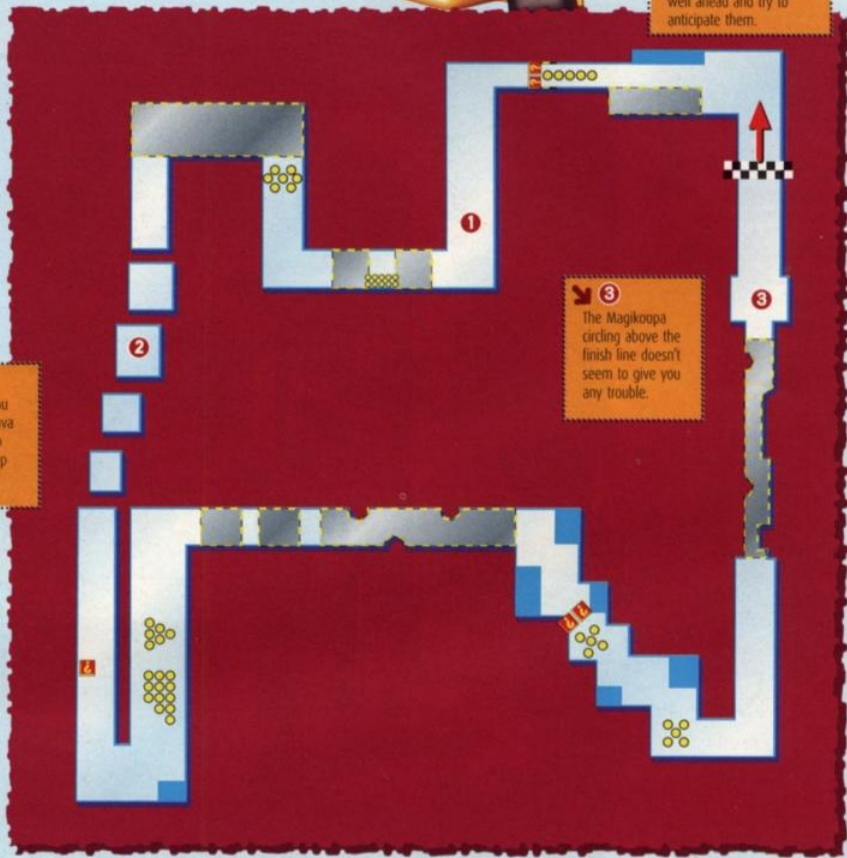
Thwomps are your main problem. Supposedly following fixed patterns, they always seem to drop right in front of you. Look well ahead and try to anticipate them.

2

There's not much you can do about the Lava Bubbles that pop up along here. Just keep 'em crossed.

3

The Magikoopa circling above the finish line doesn't seem to give you any trouble.



DONUT PLAINS 3

Now here's a toughie. The track's twisty and narrow and lined with speed-knacker grass, and a couple of rickety bridges can easily spell disaster. (They're clever like that.)

SNES
BONUS
TRACK!



ADVANCE



SPECIAL CUP

GREAT LAKES

LAKESIDE PARK

A picture-postcard setting, but a peril-packed circuit. The falling lava can be avoided through judicious use of a shortcut, but a pair of bouncy barriers will have you driving round in circles if you don't give them a wide berth.

➔ ①

If you're packing a mushroom, swing right after the bridge, activate the aforementioned foodstuff and jump just as you hit the water to slice a chunk off the circuit...

➔ ②

...and avoid the lumps of lava.

➔ ⑤

Veer left upon take-off to cut the corner - and avoid crashing into the barrier ahead.

ICON KEY

START/FINISH

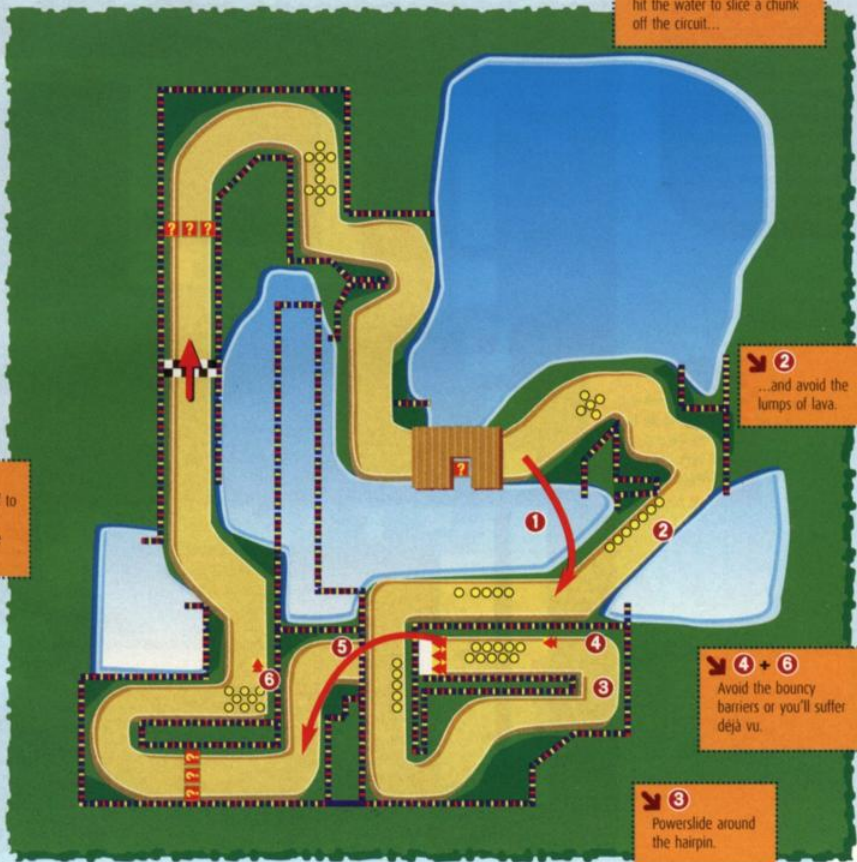
JUMPS

RAMPS

BARRIERS

COINS

POWER-UPS



➔ ④ + ⑥

Avoid the bouncy barriers or you'll suffer déjà vu.

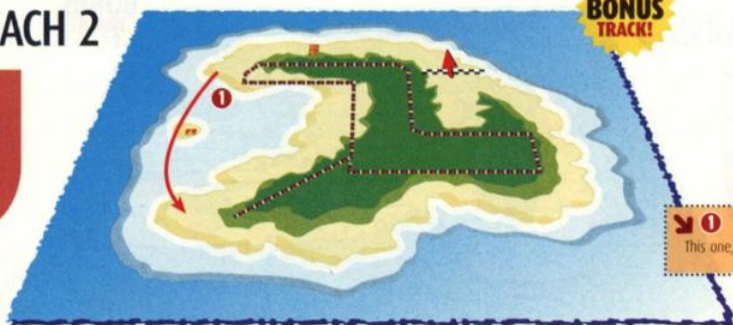
➔ ③

Powerslide around the hairpin.

KOOPA BEACH 2

There's a variety of shallow-water routes on the left-hand side of the island. Be sure to take the one leading across the power-upped island.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



➔ ①

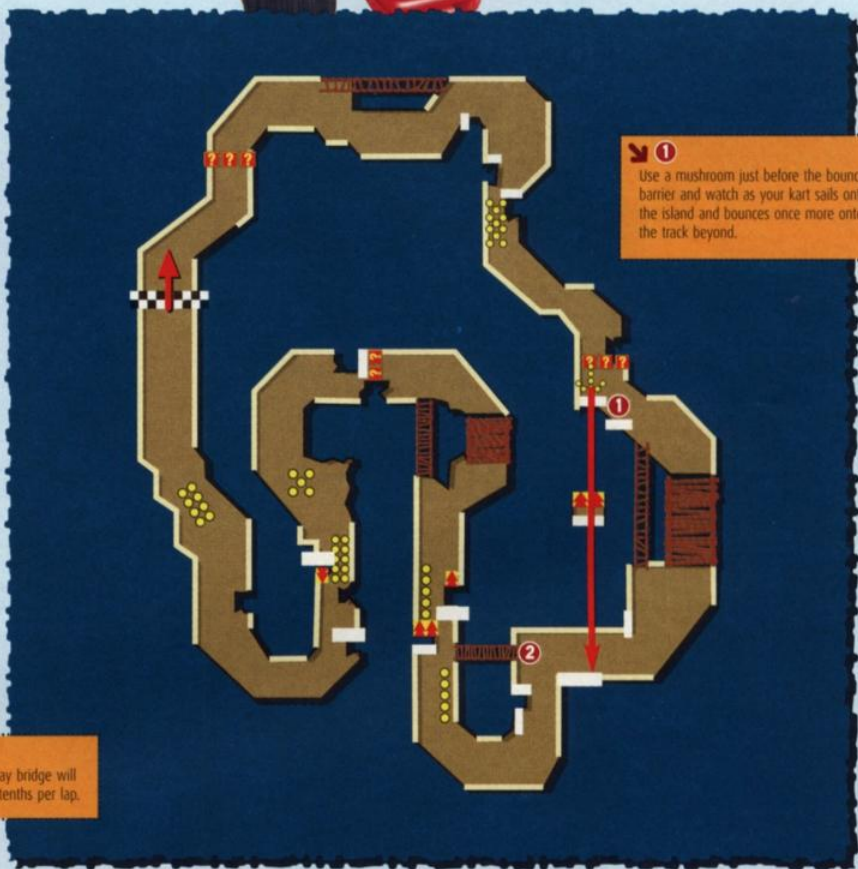
This one, that is.

PIER PRESSURE

BROKEN PIER



Eek. Haunted, holey and horribly high, Broken Pier will have you tumbling into the abyss at the drop of a hat. Clip a barrier block and you stop dead, annoyingly. But once you've hit a block it disappears...

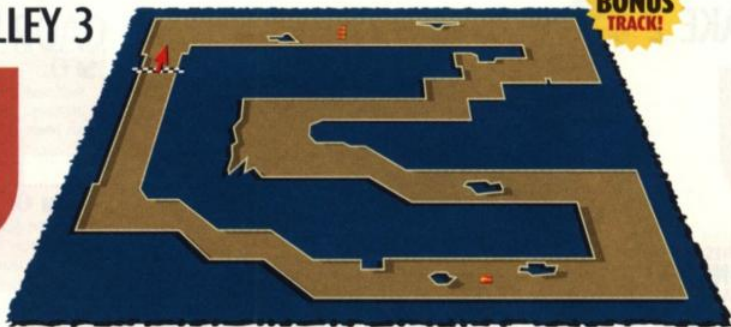


➡ ① Use a mushroom just before the bouncy barrier and watch as your kart sails onto the island and bounces once more onto the track beyond.

➡ ② This rickety railway bridge will shave off a few tenths per lap.

GHOST VALLEY 3

Ack. No short cuts here. Or very much at all, in fact, apart from dicy holes in the floor. If you're feeling brave, try cutting corners by hopping across them.



**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**

ADVANCE

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SPECIAL CUP

CONTINUED...

BOW OUT

BOWSER CASTLE 4

Most troublesome of all of Bowser's fortified dwellings, Castle 4 seems designed to foil the keen powerslider, with holes placed on many of the most tempting corners. No shortcuts to be found either, damn him.



If you dart down here to take advantage of the boost pads - and grab the power-up - you'll need to swerve hard at the end to get back on track. Only charlatans dab the brakes.

ICON KEY



START/FINISH



JUMPS



RAMPS



BARRIERS



COINS



POWER-UPS



As ever, Thwomps mean trouble if you don't keep an eye on them as you approach and avoid their landing spots.



Be wary of the little clockwork Koopa Troopers.



VANILLA LAKE 2

Walls of ice blocks make this a tough nut to crack. And a slippery one, too. Sort of like a Brazil nut smeared with Vaseline, then.

**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**



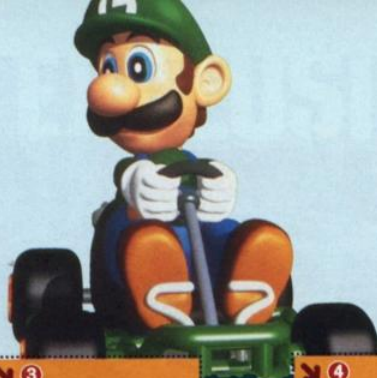
You'll have to hop or mushroom your way to this power-up.



This gap in the wall isn't exactly a secret - even the CPU racers head through it.

POT O' GOLD

RAINBOW ROAD



So named, perhaps, because although it's zippy you can expect to bungle a lot. But while the bouncy kerbs like nothing better than to toss you into inky oblivion, they can also be your friend – you can use them to cut corners and leap from one bit of track to the next. Improvisation is the key here – and careful use of mushrooms.

➤ **1**
Use a mushroom here, and be ready to brake as you land to avoid overshooting.

➤ **2 7 9 + 10**
Clouds should be given a wide berth – they'll shrink you and cost you many coins.

➤ **3**
Clearly you'll need a mushroom for this shortcut, firing it well before the edge.

➤ **4**
No need for a mushroom to cut this hairpin.



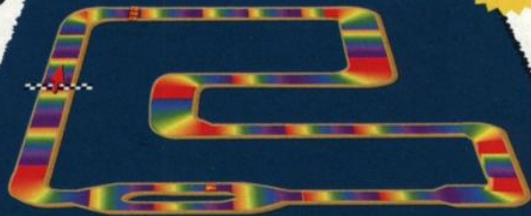
➤ **5**
A mushroom-based shortcut.

➤ **8**
Hopping onto this pathway speeds things up considerably, but be ready to brake as you rejoin the main circuit.

➤ **6**
You can hop across here without myco-assistance.

RAINBOW ROAD

An entirely featureless end to the game, enlivened only by the ever-present danger of falling over the edge. Coins are tricky to spot against the Technicolor tarmac.



**SNES
BONUS
TRACK!**

How To...

KICK ASS IN BATTLE MODE

Gentlemen of yore settled their differences with lances or pistols; today, disputes are more commonly solved in Mario Kart's Battle Mode.

QUICK TIPS

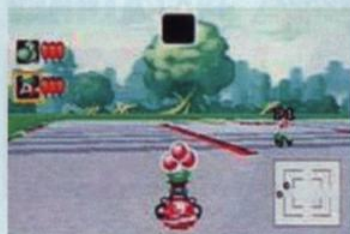
Get tooled up quicker by pressing L the moment you've run over a power-up block. You'll skip the ooh-what-will-it-be? sequence and get the weapon straight away.

If you're being chased, don't forget that you can fire green shells backwards by pressing Down as you launch them. Doing the same thing with a red shell will drop it on the ground, where it'll await an approaching kart and then go in for the kill.

Don't underestimate bananas. In an emergency, a banana can be launched forwards by pressing Up as you drop it. Definitely worth a punt on those long straights.

Remember that hits by your opponents aren't the only way you can lose balloons. Falling into water or lava is just as deflationary.

Use the scanner to locate your quarry. Sounds obvious, but it's all too easy to grab a red shell and then drive round aimlessly for hours (well, maybe not hours, but you get the drift) looking for someone to launch it at.



★ It sounds obvious, but make sure you use the scanner (bottom right) at all times.

ARENA GUIDE

BATTLE COURSE 1

A classically styled arena that tends to have every-one driving round in circles. Once you've found a red shell, cut off your target by driving across the middle, or do a U-turn (A+B+the D-pad).

BATTLE COURSE 2

The combination of walls and ramps mean you can only drive round the perimeter one way. Unscrupulous karters might like to camp with their backs to a ramp, where they can't be attacked from behind, so watch out for stationary dots on the scanner.

BATTLE COURSE 3

Battles don't tend to last long in this open-plan arena, where red shells invariably find their mark. The corners are good defensive positions if you're a camping fan; the central area is Shell Alley.



★ Error! Always have your red shell cocked and ready. Press and hold L1 to have it racked up and ready.

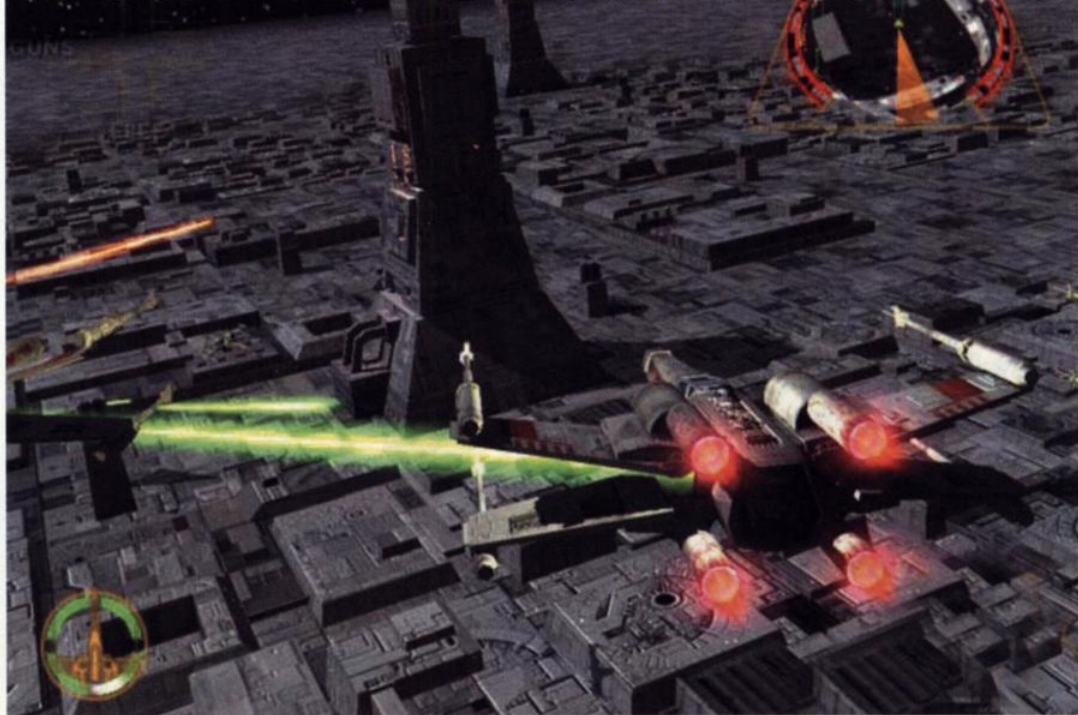


★ Remember that doing a U-turn is always a good option in battle (A+B+the D-pad).

BATTLE COURSE 4

The water hazards generally claim more victims than shells on this one. The gentlemanly alternative: shun power-ups and instead attempt to joust each other into the water.

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ADVANCE CLASSIC MOMENT 01

This is the best thing on GBA, that's for sure. In fact the only other handheld games we've played so obsessively are *Tetris* and *Zelda IV*, many years ago, since when my Game Boy has been used almost exclusively for quick blasts on lesser titles.

'Finishing' the game and unlocking all the bonus tracks isn't exactly the biggest challenge in the world, but it's incredibly satisfying. The 150cc Special cup was the last one to fall – a nerve-racking jaunt around Lakeside Park, finishing first, followed by a comfortable win at Broken Pier. Another victory at Bowser Castle 4, including a carefully laid red shell to deprive second-placed Luigi of a single point, and the championship was won. A top-

four place at Rainbow Road would suffice. Sounds simple doesn't it?

Except there's pride at stake. A win and a fast time around the scarily tough final track might just be enough for an elusive Triple Star ranking... Straight out into the lead, staying well away from

"Unlocking all the bonus tracks isn't the biggest challenge in the world, but it's incredibly satisfying"

trouble, using the trackside border to leap over corners. Precious hundredths saved. Hitting every turbo, racing at the limit – perfect.

Until disaster strikes, and a mistimed final corner results in an unscheduled trip into space. Limping over the line in fourth place, we're humbled by a miserable 'D' ranking. Time to grab some headphones and enjoy the ending music, then maybe switch off the GBA for a few minutes.

We'll be back... •



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The fate of the ChuChus is in your hands!
The countdown has begun!



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